



**National Pg 3**  
Hotel employees beg govt intervention

**National Pg 4**  
Mbeya installs digital X-ray machine

**National Pg 5**  
Pepper farmers finding more markets



BACK TO SCHOOL - BUT WITH EXTRA CAUTION

Primary school pupils at Dodoma city's Fountain Gate Academy wash their hands with soap and running water yesterday before attending classes as a precaution against Covid-19 infections, as schools reopened across Tanzania after some three months of closure due to the pandemic. Photo: Correspondent Ibrahim Joseph

# EWURA: No cause for petrol shortage

## Major importers 'have plenty of oil in Dar harbour storage'

By Guardian Reporter

THE Energy and Water Utilities Regulatory Authority (EWURA) has allayed fears over fuel supply, saying the country has enough stock of petrol and diesel for the next month.

The acting Ewura Director General, Godfrey Chibulunje, told reporters in Dar es Salaam yesterday that the country's oil reserves have

92.4m litres of petrol to fit the country's needs for 25 days and 147.3m litres of diesel enough for 29 days.

Users ought to get the products as they are supposed to be available in all filling stations and sold at indicative prices, he said.

Oil reserves also include 98m litres of petrol and 147.4m litres intended for transportation to

TURN TO PAGE 2



## EALA, Secretariat raise dire finances alarm to summit

By Correspondent Marc Nkwame, Arusha

POLICY makers participating in the ongoing East African Legislative Assembly virtual sessions have expressed concern over the failure by member states to remit annual contributions enabling the East African Community to operate.

Debating at the fifth meeting of the third session in the fourth assembly, the regional legislators motioned that the six governments of EAC member states must honour their budgetary obligations, though on the other hand, some acknowledged challenges faced by the countries in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic and related lockdown.

The motion was moved by Aden Omar Abdikadir (pictured), an EALA member

TURN TO PAGE 2

## France extends 600bn/- for sanitation, rural electricity

By Henry Mwangonde

THE Treasury yesterday signed a 230m euros (600bn/-) concessional loan accord with the French Development Agency (AFD) for rural electrification along with supporting water supply and sanitation services in Lake Victoria.

In the credited funds, about 100m euro will be used to support the National Rural Electrification Program, while 30m euros goes to sanitation services. Another 100m euros chunk is slated for the Tanzania-Zambia Power Interconnection Project.

On electrification it is expected that the loan will finance densification projects in 10 regions,

connecting up to 90,000 households.

It will also enable installation of about 3MW of solar production capacity in remote centers operated by TANESCO, for years using diesel generators.

Treasury Permanent Secretary Dotto James said the funding will go a long way into supporting earmarked priority projects.

"Power interconnectivity was aimed initially at ensuring power supply security for the zone and, in the medium term, pooling of the region's energy resources," he said.

The funding entails installation of a 400 kV transmission line and substations from

TURN TO PAGE 2

## TRL: Stations along SGR sections '90pc complete'

By Guardian Reporter, Kilosa

STATIONS for the Dar es Salaam - Makutupora portion of the Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) have been built by up to 90 percent.

The Director General of the Tanzania Railways Ltd, Masanja Kadogosa made this observation at a function to lay the foundation stone for construction of 2.7 kilometers four underground tunnels for the electric train, graced by President John Magufuli.

He said the tunnels will stop flooding challenges affecting railway transportation during rainy seasons.

"The current railway line passes near Mkondoa River, with the company spending a lot of funds for repairs upon destructions wrought

by flooding," he said.

The building of 16 stations of the railway line now reaching halfway point has reached 90 percent while another portion has attained 15.8 percent of that kind of infrastructure, he stated.

The contractor, Yapi Merkez continues with building of workshops and installation of communication systems, the TRL CEO further noted.

Thej contractor has already fixed railway track to a 110 kilometer distance for the first part and 35 kilometers for the second part of the line, he said.

The Dar es Salaam-Makutupora section of SGR will cost \$3.1m upon completion, he pointed out. In his address, President Magufuli said

TURN TO PAGE 2

## SHARE FACTS ABOUT COVID-19

Know the facts about coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) and help stop the spread of rumors.

**FACT 1** Diseases can make anyone sick regardless of their race or ethnicity.

Fear and anxiety about COVID-19 can cause people to avoid or reject others even though they are not at risk for spreading the virus.

**FACT 2** For most people, the immediate risk of becoming seriously ill from the virus that causes COVID-19 is thought to be low.

Older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions may be at higher risk for more serious complications from COVID-19.

**FACT 3** Someone who has completed quarantine or has been released from isolation does not pose a risk of infection to other people.

For up-to-date information, visit CDC's coronavirus disease 2019 web page.



03/10/20 6/30/2020

**FACT 4** There are simple things you can do to help keep yourself and others healthy.

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating or preparing food.

- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Stay home when you are sick.

- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.

**FACT 5** You can help stop COVID-19 by knowing the signs and symptoms:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

Seek medical advice if you

- Develop symptoms

AND

- Have been in close contact with a person known to have COVID-19 or if you live in or have recently been in an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19.

cdc.gov/COVID-19



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# EWURA: No cause for petrol shortage

FROM PAGE 1

foreign markets, he stated.

"About 22 companies have large petrol reserves at the Dar es Salaam Port, while 27 firms have sufficient reserves for diesel," he said.

Ewura's explanations come at a time that motorists are finding it difficult to refuel in various parts of the city.

A partial survey showed that well situated filling stations had no fuel, pushing motorists to move up and down to find an accessible fueling point.

"I spent two hours looking for fuel. From Sinza to Sam Nujoma to Bagamoyo Road there was no fuel, but for one filling station that had diesel. I had to park my car at the filling station. I'm wondering as why is it so," said Abdallah Mkama of Mikochei suburb.

Sumbawanga municipality has for two days experienced shortage of the fuel with claims that some filling stations were hoarding the product to create an artificial shortage for super profits, inconveniencing motorists and the public in general.

In response, Chibulunje admitted scarcity of fuel in some parts of the country, saying: "Ewura has been

following up on the matter by paying visits in filling stations in various districts and regions."

In areas where there was scarcity, Ewura had been directing filling stations to buy the product from wholesale fuel companies like Moil, Total, Oryx, Star Oil and Olympic Petroleum, he said.

Another bulk consignment was expected to arrive yesterday and earmarked for supplies to Geita, Biharamulo, Kibondo, Ilula, Iramba, Igunga, Kondo, Kibaigwa, Mpwapwa, Kibondo, Kongwa, Mbande, Mvumi, Mlali, Manyoni and Kyela, he said.

Last week EWURA threatened to revoke operational licences of two wholesale oil companies and had already closed three petrol stations, citing a series of irregularities.

Ewura said that the companies violated their licence conditions by hiding fuel, while the stations were selling the products above EWURA indicative prices.

Following complaints from the public over the scarcity of petroleum products in various parts of the country, EWURA unleashed a crackdown to investigate and find out those who are behind the shortages.



President John Magufuli signs on a tunnel wall yesterday moments after laying the foundation stone of a standard gauge railway (SGR) project tunnel in Kilosa District, Morogoro Region. Photo: State House

FROM PAGE 1

construction of the tunnels will include building of a half kilometer flyover. He said Tanzania is not a poor country as its people can finance a 7.2trn/- electric rail line.

"Improvement of railway infrastructures in Morogoro Region will attract more investments as well as tourists. Authorities should consider

## TRL: Stations along SGR sections 'complete by 90pc'

the introduction of a special economic corridor in all the areas covered by the SGR," the president directed.

He directed the contractor executing the 24 kilometers Kilosa - Dumila road to complete and hand over the project to the government as it has taken a long

time.

Magufuli stated: "We have given the job to a local contractor, but he is not doing well. The project has taken several months to complete. We want the road to be completed so that we can start constructing the

70 kilometers stretch from Dumila to Mikumi."

In 2015 there were 2,000 villages connected to electricity services but the number has now increased to 9,114 villages across the country. He said efforts are on-going for connection of

the remaining 3,000 villages through the Rural Energy Agency (REA).

Construction of the strategic SGR line consists of five phases covering 1,219 kilometers, covering Dar es Salaam to Morogoro, Morogoro to Makutupora, Makutupora to Tabora,

Tabora to Isaka and finally Isaka to Mwanza.

Upon completion, the SGR line shall link Tanzania with neighbouring countries, with the president laying the foundation stone for construction of the line in April 2017.



Finance and Planning ministry permanent secretary Doto James (L) and the French Ambassador to Tanzania, Frédéric Clavier, exchange documents in Dar es Salaam yesterday shortly after signing a 230 million Euros (about 600bn/-) French Development Agency concessional loan agreement on rural electrification, water supply and sanitation in Tanzania's segment of Lake Victoria. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

FROM PAGE 1

from Kenya.

Over 45 percent of the annual EAC Budget is financed by member state contributions, with some EALA members advising that it was high time the situation is formally notified to the EAC summit so that the six presidents come to the rescue of the EAC.

The now ending EAC Budget for the fiscal year 2019-2020, tabled in June last year was to the tune of \$11.4m, in which the Arusha-based East African Community Secretariat was slated to obtain \$53.2 and the EALA \$18.9m for the year, while the East African Court of Justice had a

## East African Community in dire financial situation

\$4.2m slice.

The Inter-University Council for East Africa was to receive \$9.5m, the Lake Victoria Basin Commission \$13.1m while \$ 4.0m was earmarked for the Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization.

The East African Science and Technology Commission was billed to obtain \$1.9m, the East African Kiswahili

Commission \$1.4m and the East African Health Research Commission \$3.9m in annual credits.

The East African Competition Authority was slated to receive \$727,501 in budgeting for financial year 2019/2020.

The EAC financial year theme was "transforming lives through industrialization and job creation

for shared prosperity." Its priority interventions touched the consolidation of the single customs territory and promotion of intra-EAC trade and export competitiveness.

It also targeted the development of regional infrastructure, effective implementation of the Common Market Protocol and enhancement of regional industrial development.

## France extends 600bn/- for Lake water, power sectors

FROM PAGE 1

Iringa to Sumbawanga via Mbeya and Tunduma, and an interconnection line in Tunduma for the border stretch with Zambia.

The project complements plans of the Tanzania Rural Energy Agency (REA) tied to grid extension and densification projects where the national grid is accessible as well as power supply for off-grid projects.

In rural areas, the historically low electricity access rate has rapidly improved in the past few years with the Rural Electrification Program. A quarter of rural households are today connected to electricity, from 17 percent in 2017.

The Tanzania-Zambia Interconnection Project is also supported by the World Bank and the European Union.

The water and sanitation sector has

historically been one of AFD's primary sectors of intervention in Tanzania with 258m euros over the past 10 years.

Stéphanie Mouen, the AFD country director, reaffirmed France's commitment to support Tanzania in its endeavor to attain middle income economy status by 2025.

"2019 was a record year with 170m euros for projects approved by AFD. 2020 is already another record year with 300m euros of financing signed and ready for implementation," she said, highlighting that 2021 will see more of project implementation.

Diversification of AFD financing activities towards other important sectors for the country is also on the cards, the director noted.

The energy sector is now the first sector in terms of AFD commitments in Tanzania with close to 427m euros approved during the past 10 years, she added.

## 120 more contract Covid-19, raising Kenya cases to 6,190

NAIROBI

A hundred and twenty more people have tested positive for the coronavirus in Kenya, raising the country's total number of confirmed cases since March 13 to 6,190.

The Health ministry announced this yesterday, saying it had tested 2,221 samples.

Chief Administrative Secretary (CAS) Rashid Aman said all but five of the new patients are Kenyans and that the youngest is six and the oldest 83.

Nairobi, the capital city, was in the lead with 67 of the cases. Mombasa County followed with 17 and then came Machakos and Kajiado with nine each, Kiambu eight, Uasin Gishu four and Nakuru, Kilifi and Narok with two each.

In Nairobi Westlands had 12 cases, Dagoretti North and Langata 11 each, Kibra six, Makadara and Starehe four each, Kamukunji three, Embakasi Central, Embakasi East, Embakasi North, Embakasi South, Embakasi West and Mathare to each, Kasarani, Roysambu, Ruaraka and Umoja one each.

In Mombasa, Mvita recorded six cases, Jomvu five, Changamwe, Kisauni and Likoni two each.

Meanwhile, the government says it is not 'important' for the public to know whether or not Kenyan Members of Parliament have tested positive for Covid-19.

While addressing the media yesterday, Jasper Kuria, a Ministry of Health Executive, also urged Kenyans to shun political gatherings.

"The numbers of Parliamentarians who have tested positive (for Covid-19) is not going to help you not turn positive. We have to fight the stigma even as we seek to ensure that Kenyans from all walks of like are healed," Kuria said.

"But then this question also shows how important it is to avoid political gatherings because we don't know whom we are interacting with. This is what we have been saying but some people say that it politics. Our (Health) CS Mutahi Kagwe told us the other day that we have to treat everyone as if they are positive. Individual responsibility is key," he added.

Reports in the Kenyan media on Monday indicated that up to six lawmakers have contracted coronavirus and are currently admitted at various hospitals in Nairobi.

AGENCIES

By Guardian Correspondent, Zanzibar

# Zanzibar hotel employees now beg govt intervention

DESPITE the government's decision to ease conditions that were imposed to curb the spreading of Covid-19, some hotel employees in Zanzibar have appealed to the government to help them go back to their respective jobs.

Speaking to this paper they said that most of the employers sent them home for leave without pay immediately after the virus outbreak was reported in the Isles.

An hotelier, Wahid Khamis called on the ministry of labour to order their employers to recall them back to office so that they continue earning income.

"We have been told that Zanzibar is free from the novel coronavirus, but our employers have not recalled us back to work. We are living in difficult conditions as we have been earning nothing for three months," he said.

Director of the Zanzibar Youth Forum, Maulid Suleiman urged the government to assist youth especially those who were working in the tourism sector.

He said youth working in the tourism sector have been largely affected by the pandemic outbreak due to job loss contributed by decreased number of

visitors.

The tourism sector has hardly hit the Covid-19 outbreak, workers have been retrenched with food suppliers staying without doing business for almost four months, he said.

Suleiman noted that although the government has opened doors for tourists to come to Zanzibar, there are still few visitors coming as some countries still have a good number of Covid-19 patients.

Archbishop of the Mkunazini Anglican church in Zanzibar, Dr Michael Hafidh said they are well prepared to start receiving tourists interested to visit the worship house which was closed since March this year.

Bishop Hafidh stated that more than 20 youth have lost jobs due to the church closure. He said they worked as tour guides showing tourists different

areas of the church which is located at Mkunazini in Unguja.

Dr Abdalla Mohamed Juma, Executive Secretary of the Zanzibar Tourism Commission said that Zanzibar has opened its skies to allow chartered flights to come directly to Unguja.

"We expect tourism activities to return to normal, this may take time because some European countries are still battling the disease," said Dr Juma.

Early this month, the government in Zanzibar announced reopening of tourism activities after they were shut down on March 20 following the outbreak of Covid-19.

Zanzibar's Minister of Information, Tourism and Heritage, Mahmoud Thabit Kombo said that all travelers to Zanzibar should hold medical health insurance and they should follow

strict guidelines on prevention of authorities.

Covid-19 imposed by Zanzibar health He said arriving travelers will

undergo screening at entry points and those found with symptoms will be sent to a designated isolation center for further tests.

On March 20, Zanzibar announced the shutting down of all tourist hotels and a ban on all tourist flights as protective measures against the Covid-19 pandemic.

Tourism is Zanzibar's largest economic sector and essential for local socioeconomic stability.



Jovin Riziki (2nd-L), coordinator of faith and community initiatives at the National Council for People Living with HIV (NACOPHA), addresses National Muslim Council (Bakwata) officials in Morogoro Region at an electoral meeting held in Morogoro municipality on Friday. Religious leaders constitute one of the outreach groups involved in the implementation of the 'Hebu Tuyajenge', a USAID-funded project meant to end child abuse and the stigmatisation of people with HIV and AIDS. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

# TanESCO directed to pay fair, full, prompt compensations

By Guardian Correspondent, Kigoma

MINISTER for Energy, Dr Medard Kalemani has given five days to Tanzania Electric Supply Company Ltd (TANESCO) to pay fair, full and prompt compensation to Kidahwe residents who were moved out to pave way for the construction of a substation at Kidahwe village in Kigoma rural district, Kigoma region.

The ultimatum was issued on June 27 this year at the launch of the exercise to compensate the people who offered their land for the construction of the Kidahwe substation.

Speaking at the event Dr Kalemani said more than 700m/- was available for compensation to 411 residents and instructed Tanesco to immediately start paying them.

"I had instructed our experts to do two jobs - first to ensure assessment is

made to people around the project for compensation and secondly to embark on preparations for the construction of the huge project," he said.

He also thanked residents of the area for offering their land for the construction of the 400kv substation that will reduce power blues in Kigoma Region.

He also called on those to be paid to spend the money wisely by buying other land plots for their economic activities. He also instructed Tanesco to start construction of the substation beginning July 5.

Kigoma Regional Commissioner Emmanuel Maganga thanked the people who offered their land for the project and assured them the money was ready for payment.

During his visit in Kigoma Region Dr Kalemani also visited the Nguruka substation at Mganza village and called on Tanesco to complete the work by July this year.



**EMBASSY OF DENMARK**  
Dar es Salaam

## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Denmark has a long-standing and strong partnership with Tanzania. Development cooperation continues to be a major element of the partnership, which also includes other areas, such as commercial relations and cooperation on foreign policy, regional as well as global. Find more information about the Danish Embassy at <http://tanzania.um.dk>

### PERSONAL ASSISTANT TO THE AMBASSADOR

We would like to invite applications from suitably qualified candidates for the position of Personal Assistant to the Ambassador. The job holder will report to the Ambassador.

**Duties and responsibilities:**

The successful candidate will have demonstrated administrative, organizational and communication skills. Specifically, the Personal Assistant will support the Ambassador with:

- Time Management: Organizing the Ambassador's diary, including arranging dates/times for meetings, in close collaboration with Embassy team. Pre-meeting verification and follow up. Dealing with last minute schedule changes. Receiving visitors to the Ambassador's office. Arranging programmes for official travel domestic and abroad.
- Entertainment: Arranging, in close consultation with Embassy team and Residence staff, events at the Ambassador Residence, including securing dates, issuing of invitations and follow up as appropriate.
- Point of contact: Handling of correspondence and phone calls with government officials, representatives of the Tanzanian society at large, the diplomatic community, incoming Danish visitors etc. Maintain and update the Embassy's contact data-base.
- Drafting basic letters, official correspondence etc. as directed by the Ambassador
- Translation of documents and speeches from English to Kiswahili and vice versa.
- General office management including logging the Ambassador's travel, leave and monthly activities.
- Arranging official visit programmes and meetings
- Assisting Danish/foreign staff at the Embassy applying for and renewing residence and work permits and as well as duty clearances.
- Perform other duties assigned by the Ambassador.

**Qualifications, Skills and Experience:**

- Excellent secretarial and administrative skills, including proficiency with Microsoft Office.
- Excellent organization skills and keen eye for details.
- Excellent command of written and spoken English and Kiswahili.
- 3-5 years substantive experience in relevant positions, preferably as Personal Assistant to an Executive in an Embassy or international organization.
- Degree in relevant academic field.
- Ability to multi-task and work as a team player.
- High level of professional integrity and service mindedness
- Strong interpersonal skills, including the ability to be professional, courteous and deal directly with key players at a senior level.

If you are interested in this exciting career opportunity, e-mail us your CV (maximum 5 pages) and one page application letter explaining your suitability for the role. Please, do not include your certificates. Write "PA\_Ambassador" in your e-mail subject line. The deadline is 10<sup>th</sup> July 2020. Only short-listed candidates will be contacted.


*We regret the vacancy is not ideal for fresh graduates.*

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**“I had instructed our experts to do two jobs – first to ensure assessment is made to people around the project for compensation and secondly to embark on preparations for the construction of the huge project**

## ★ BISMILAH RAHMAN RAHIM




The family of the **LATE Dr. Omar Ali Juma** invites you for prayers in memory of the **LATE DR. OMAR ALI JUMA** which will be held on **Thursday 2nd July, 2020** at Ngazija Mosque, at 4.00 p.m.

All relatives and friends are invited.

Your presence will be highly appreciated.

May God rest his Soul in Eternal Peace.

**Amen.**





Zanzibar Education and Vocational Training minister Riziki Pembe Juma has a word with Form Six students from Lumumba and Jang'ombe secondary schools in Zanzibar yesterday shortly before they began sitting for their national examinations. Photo: Rahma Suleiman

By Guardian Correspondent, Bukoba

## MV Victoria set to stimulate Kagera economic activities

THE long waited coming back of MV Victoria will have positive impact in stimulating economic activities for residents of regions surrounding Lake Victoria.

MV Victoria, which ferries passengers and goods from Mwanza city to Kemono and Bukoba ports in Kagera Region, stopped offering its service 2014 due to mechanical challenges.

After the government's efforts of investing 22.8bn/- to rehabilitate the passenger ship on Lake Victoria, expressions of how long waited dream have come true for Kagera residents.

Kagera Region residents are now relieved by the low cost of freight for goods transported by the MV New Victoria following its arrival here on Monday after her maiden trip from

Mwanza Port.

Speaking to this paper Muhamed Omar and Mwajuma Iddi, banana and avocado traders said they are now relieved by the low cost provided by the renovated ship as road transport was costly and ate much of their profits.

Muhamed Omar said in the past he used to take bananas to Mwanza and return to Bukoba with rice bus suspended the business due high transport cost.

On her part Mwajuma Iddi, resident

of Bukoba said the coming of the ship will bring peace and happiness as their business activities across the Lake was severely shaken due to costly road transport.

She said a bag of avocado was charged 40,000/- by bus and if one has 6 bags then the profit is negligible.

The Ruling Chama cha Mapinduzi (CCM) Secretary for Mobilization and Ideology Humphrey Polepole said for six years residents of Kagera Region had suffered for lack of reliable

lake transport and added that with the coming of MV New Victoria will simplify freight transport business as the vessel can carry 200 tonnes of cargo and 1,200 passengers.

Kagera Regional Commissioner Brig Gen Marco Gaguti said residents of Kagera Region have been engaged in agriculture and fishing activities for a long time.

He said the region produces bananas among major food crop that is 64 per cent.

## TPSF sees the future of vibrant private sector in hands of young people

By Guardian Correspondent, Songwe

THE Tanzania Private Sector Foundation (TPSF) said that it believes the future of Tanzania's energetic and strong private sector rests in the hands of the country's youth.

TPSF Executive Director, Godfrey Simbeye said current efforts being made by the TPSF assures a strong foundation for vibrant private sector aim at benefiting enterprising skilled young Tanzanians.

He said symposia for youths held in regions sought to achieve this goal.

"We have jointly, with Songwe Region, organised a symposium that specifically seeks to expose young people to socio-economic opportunities in their region and Tanzania. We want to show young people how they can and must be important part of Tanzania's present and future vibrant private sector. We want to see the informal economy that host millions of young people growing strongly," he told reporters.

He said the private sector grows and will continue to grow as a result of cooperation between the private and public institutions and development partners. "Our task is to coordinate economic activities and investment. When we look at the overall picture we still see many young Tanzanians outside the informal economy. We want them inside the informal economy. We congratulate Songwe on sharing our view on this issue. We appeal to all regions and institutions to join us in the struggle to ensure young people achieve their dreams," Simbeye said.

The executive director said the government was working hard to make Tanzania a middle-income industrial nation.

But, he said, that goal would be hard to achieve if young people remained outside the informal economy and were not active participants in building Tanzania's private sector.

TPSF is the umbrella organization for private sector organisations and societies and is part of the Tanzania National Business Council (TNBC).

Simbeye called on youths in Songwe Region to unleash and fully exploit business opportunities existing in the region to foster their socio-economic development growth.

"Youths are important resources in transforming the socio-economic development growth of this region. We (TPSF) rely heavily on you as Songwe

Region is a gateway to SADC countries," Simbeye said here over the weekend.

Speaking during a symposium for youths in Songwe meant to explore youth on abundant businesses and investment opportunities available in the region, Simbeye said it was now high time for youths to come forward and utilise the opportunities to transform their living standards.

"This symposium dubbed 'Kijana na Ndoti yako' is geared towards linking youths in Songwe Region to exploit available opportunities in sectors such as agriculture, tourism, health, mining and transportation," he explained.

Simbeye commended Songwe Regional Commissioner (retired) Brigadier General Nicodemus Mwangela and his team for working closely with TPSF in addressing challenges facing youths urging them to explore into businesses ventures and investment opportunities.

He acknowledged the support of partners like Trademark East Africa (TMEA) for supporting public-private dialogues (PPDs) and that the Songwe youth symposium was a testimony to that goal. "TPSF is pleased to see public and private sectors work together in addressing employment challenges facing youths. It is my optimism that the symposium would act as an empowering mechanism to youths," he said. He said the government in partnership with the private sector will come up with a policy whose priority aims at supporting youths involvement in socio-economic growth and development in the country.

"My appeal to you all (youths), please form groups so that you can access capital. There are a lot of opportunities for youths to grow and prosper," the TPSF boss stressed.

Earlier, Songwe RC Mwangela urged the youths in the region to be proactive, innovative and use their time to work for economic growth of the region.

"This symposium is purely an innovation of youths themselves. We (the government) and private sector have the role play to ensure they succeed in their pursuit," RC Mwangela said, calling for youths to continue working hard.

Charles Mkemesa, a youth who participated at the symposium said it as an eye opener for them to broaden their understanding of businesses and investment opportunities available in the region.

## Dodoma director: We've lined ourselves up well, have ideal environment to hook investors

By Polycarp Machira, Dodoma

DODOMA city authorities have called on both Tanzanian and international investors to think of investing in the city, saying it is well planned and ready to accommodate both big and small investments.

City executive director, Godwin Kunambi, noting that unlike other cities in the country, the capital city is free from congestions like traffic jam among others.

"Dodoma is one of the cities in the country that is well planned with designed infrastructures and this has helped reduce congestion" he said, adding that it is the best place to invest.

Speaking during an exclusive interview with this paper, Kunambi stated that roads leading into and out of the city are free from traffic jam and even the internal roads are well maintained.

He cited some of the well tarmac internal roads as Martin Luther-Swaswa, Wajenzi-Chang'ombe, Meriwa-Swaswa, Emmaus -African Dreams, Ipagal-Ilazo, Kisasa-Njedengwa, among others.

Kunambi also said there are open recreational places at different parts of the city, naming them as Nyerere Square which is right in the middle of the city, Chinang'ali park, about a kilometer from the central business district and others spread at different places.

According to the city boss, the cost of owning a plot of land in the city is much low that any willing person can afford. He noted that the process is very transparent compared to the bureaucratic process in other cities

elsewhere.

He added that approval of building plans also takes shorter time and with considerations to the client's needs for development or investments in the plots of land.

Kunambi named areas with investment plots as Njedengwa with 580 hectares having 141 plots measuring at least two to 26 hectares each depending on the investor's needs.

"Specific building in the area should be storey residential apartments, business premises and social service areas" he said.

He explained that out of the above mentioned, 46 plots are for institutions, 20 for business while other 75 are residential ones, all situated in a well tarmac roads connection.

Another area is Iyumbu new city with 252 hectares holding 242 plots whereby ten plots are for business, two for small industries, 173 for commercial and residential as 57 others are for 'special residential'.

He added that city authority welcome all investors and is ready to conduct more infrastructural adjustments improve any specific areas as per the investor's request,

**Specific building in the area should be storey residential apartments, business premises and social service areas**



ACP Salumu Hamduni (standing), who was appointed Arusha Regional Police Commander only days ago, introduces himself to Arusha regional commissioner Idd Kimanta (L) in the latter's office in Arusha city yesterday. Looking on is former Arusha RPC Jonathan Shanna. Photo: Correspondent Wainde Shizza

## Mbeya referral hospital installs modern digital X-ray machine

By Guardian Correspondent, Mbeya

THE Ministry of Health, Community Development, gender, Children and Elders has installed a modern, digital X-Ray machine at Mbeya referral hospital that is expected to beef up services as the old one is dilapidated.

The machine was presented to the

hospital's management by Eng Onesmo Haule who installed at the hospital's X-Ray unit and issued instructions on how best to operate it.

Receiving the equipment, the hospital's senior medical officer Dr Gloria Mbwile thanked the government, saying the current machine was very old and did not work properly as

expected.

He said the new machine will assist to beef up health services in the hospital.

She said: "We will ensure we take care of the machine by servicing it from time to time so that it lasts long and I appeal to the staff at the X-Ray unit to offer better services to patients."

Dr Gloria said the machine will now

embrace the digital system.

Presenting the machine on behalf of the Health ministry, Eng Haule called upon the hospital's to maintain it so that it lasts longer. Without mentioning the machine's real cost, Eng Haule said it is among the very expensive equipment hence when it breaks down a lot of money is needed for repair.



Government Chief Medical Officer Prof Abel Makubi (C) cuts a ribbon in Dar es Salaam yesterday to launch the fourth edition - 2020 - of the Clients' Service Charter of the Tanzania Medicines and Medical Devices Authority. He is with the authority's board chairman, Erick Shitindi, and acting director general Adam Fimbo. Photo: Correspondent Miraji Msaia

By Guardian Correspondent, Singida

## Pepper farmers in Singida looking for more markets

FARMERS engaging on cultivation of pepper and chilies in Mtunduru village, Ikungi District in Singida Region have a reason to smile, thanks to a private company-Vegrab Organic Farming Ltd which has partnered with a tractor selling firm, Agri-Com to secure markets for the products.

Vegrab Organic Farming Ltd Director, Gladness Nyange said there is a huge demand for hot pepper within and outside the country, insisting on farmers to engage on commercial farming of the spices.

"Cultivation of pepper may improve the livelihood of farmers; you can export the spices to a number of countries across Africa. You only need to put more efforts in expanding the farms to increase productivity as well as quality of the product," said Nyange.

According to her, Singida Region is set to

become a major producer of pepper in Eastern Africa calling upon farmers to consider professional advices from extension officers. She said Tanzania will be exporting pepper to the rest of Africa in coming years.

Nyange explained that Singida Region has the best soil for pepper cultivation noting that chilies and other spices cultivated in the region are of good quality compared to similar products from other places within East Africa.

Speaking at the launching event for pepper auctioning, Ikungi District Cooperative Officer, Gurisha Msemo said they have entered into contract with the company which will buy pepper for three years consecutively starting

with the 2019/2020 season.

He said in this season, the company will buy a kilogramme of pepper at between 4,500/- and 5,000/-.

Msemo said that auctioning of the product has been conducted in Mtunduru village in Ikungi District because the area has a good number of pepper farmers. He said that out of the 159 farmers engaging in pepper cultivation, 110 are from Ikungi District.

Chairperson of Kipunda Agricultural Marketing Co-operative Societies (AMCOS) Omari Nyuda highlighted the need for farmers to ensure production of quality pepper to be able to sell them in and outside the country.

## TARI Kihinga to train Kigoma extension officers on oil palm agronomic practices

By Guardian Correspondent, Dodoma

AGRICULTURAL extension officers in Kigoma region will from next month start receiving special training on agronomic practices for the professional cultivation of oil palm.

The move, is part of preliminary preparations by the government to shape the farmers in the western region in readiness to enter into mass cultivation of the crop.

In recent years, the government opted to revamp production of palm oil in concerted efforts to curb increased importation of the crop into the country despite Tanzania having opportunity to enable production.

Giving an interview to The Guardian, the national coordinator for oil palm research in Tanzania, Dr Filson Kagimbo, expressed that after Kigoma, the exercise will later on be extended to other oil palm production regions, including Mbeya, Morogoro, Kagera, Tanga, Dar es Salaam, Cost and Zanzibar.

"In Tanzania, oil palm production is still mainly concentrated in Kigoma region, which accounts for more than 80 percent of all oil palm production in Tanzania, and thus, that's why we have decided to start imparting the extension officers in the region with the best practices," he said.

Dr Kagimbo said the centre, TARI-Kihinga, in Kigoma region, was continuing with a major task of producing improved oil palm seeds, of coded TENERA, meant for freely distribution to farmers.

He detailed that, as of 20th June this year, the centre had already produced at least 1,805,868 seeds, which suffice to cover a total of 36,117 acres.

With focus to produce a total of 5,000,000 seeds annually, he informed, "In order to attain the set seeds production target, TARI Kihinga is producing 2,000,000 seeds, whereby the centre has entered into contract with two separate companies, Yangu Macho Group Limited and Felisa company for the production of the rest 3,000,000 seeds."

Dr Kagimbo expressed that the 5,000,000 seeds, currently under production, will be distributed to farmers in the region by the end of this year.

And he told the publication that, Kitwanga prison in Kigoma district was identified as a centre of production of improved oil palm seedlings, TENERA variety, saying that TARI has already cumulatively supplied more than 300,000 seeds to the prison for the purpose.

Moreover, TARI has so far distributed 191,000

improved seed varieties to six districts in the region.

Despite multiple efforts to push for mass cultivation of the crop, Dr Kagimbo cited lack of enough improved oil palm seed varieties and poor awareness on best practices among farmers and agricultural officers among factors that might thwart the move.

"In Tanzania, we are facing the challenge of absence of agricultural researchers who've specialised in oil palm production. If at all the country needs to succeed, there's a need for introduction of oil palm syllabuses in all agriculture colleges," he observed.

Available records depicts that in 2018, Tanzania produced a total of 40,500 tonnes of palm oil, out of which, 31,750 tonnes was produced from 19,640 hectare in Kigoma.

"The amount produced is equivalent to 16 tonnes per hectare which is lower than the average produced in Malaysia, of 8 to 9 tonnes per hectare. The low palm oil produced is contributed to the use of low yielding oil palm varieties, small areas of land devoted to palm production, poor agronomic practices, use of low-quality planting material, old palm trees which have not been replanted for over a century, pot processing facilities as well as lack of extension services," he insisted.

To improve oil palm production in Tanzania, he observed, that there's a need of using generating high yielding adaptable varieties and replant the new oil palm trees.

He elaborated that most farmers do not use any input on oil palm farms and uses poor agronomic practices associated with the use of fire in weed management, lack of water supplements during dry spell, soil infertility, improper pruning and harvesting technique attributed to tremendous yield losses.

"Capacity building on proper crop management practices and provision of subsidies for most of the required agricultural inputs may significantly improve oil palm yield in Tanzania," he advised.

Statistic depicts that Tanzania imports 365,000 metric tonnes of edible oil annually which costs the government at least 443bn/-

Palm oil is the most consumed edible oil in Tanzania due to its widespread availability and cost-effectiveness. In 2016, domestic edible oil consumption was estimated to be 570,000MT, 64 percent of it being palm oil, 30 percent sunflower and 2 percent cottonseed oil.

## 'Chunya district produces high quality tobacco in the country'

By Guardian Correspondent, Chunya

CHUNYA District in Mbeya Region is mentioned as the area that produces high quality tobacco in the country following many farmers determination to abide by better farming techniques for the crop.

This was revealed here at the weekend by the Acting Director of Tanzania Tobacco Board Stanley Mnonzya during the launching of the national tobacco markets at Lupatingatinga Ward in Chunya District.

He said there are 12 regions that cultivate tobacco but in other areas farmers do not abide by directives from agricultural experts, the situation that reduces the crop's quality and asked secondary cooperative unions to give education to farmers on quality

tobacco farming.

Mnonzya said in addition to its high quality there are some farmers who do not adhere to farming laws by employing children to work on farms and by not planting trees for drying the crop.

He said because of this, some buyers refuse buying the crop, and to remedy the situation TTB has started removing such farmers from its register.

Chunya District Commissioner Maryprisca Mahundi said despite her district being mentioned producer of high quality tobacco, this year quality has gone down due to effects of climate change.

She said this year had heavy prolonged rains, the situation that prevented farmers to dry the crop to the quality required.

"Another problem confronting

tobacco farmers is its low price due to having only one buyer who has no competitor, we ask the ministry to help us find other buyers," she said.

The Agriculture Minister, Japhet Hasunga, said some tobacco buyers ran away from the Tanzania market and went to Zimbabwe, Malawi and other countries due to various challenges that emerged in the country starting 2014.

He said some of these problems have been solved by the government and already his ministry continues trade talks with Egypt and China to come and buy Tanzania's tobacco.

He called upon tobacco farmers in the country to continue following farming procedures of the crop to avoid being spurned by buyers and pledged that the government will continue supervising the cash crop.



The construction of a bridge linking Keko Magurumbasi and Keko Mwanga wards in Dar es Salaam's Temeke municipality has made steady progress, as Correspondent Sabato Kasika confirmed at the weekend.



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Director General  
The Energy and Water Utilities Regulatory Authority (EWURA)

# TGNP highlighting need for promoting integrated schools

By Correspondent James Kandoya

TANZANIA Gender Networking Programme (TGNP) has appealed to the government to improve and upgrade integrated schools (with inclusive education) to deliver quality education to provide fairground for those without disabilities.

TGNP Head of Programme-Knowledge Research and Analysis, Happy Maruchu said that at the weekend in the journalist's training on the importance of Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) held in Dar es Salaam region.

She said everyone had the right to make the best of the life they were born into through quality education adding that going to school is not just about acquiring knowledge to help you find a job, but it also about developing the skills for building successful relationships and discovering friendships.

Maruchu explained that move should go concurrently with more teaching of students with disabilities so that they can compete with those without disabilities.

In Tanzania the majority of disabled children are denied a basic education, denied vocational skills, denied employment opportunities and denied a future.

"Children with disabilities have a right to make the best of the life they are born into to realise their dreams. Therefore, it is the role of the government to improve the learning environment to the children with disabilities to create a fair platform," she said.

"Concerted efforts are needed to identify disabled children of schoolgoing age and enroll them. We need also to train more teachers to teach this particular group because they have a right to access education," she added.

Commenting on the training, she said it is aimed at sharing the 2020/21

sector budget analysis findings and recommendations as well as to develop action plans on the dissemination of the budget findings basing on Gender Responsive Budget.

Maruchu added that in the 2020/21 national budget, the government has promised to build new 15 dormitories for girls students in 15 secondary schools to help those living in a difficult environment.

Upon its completion, a total of 1200 girls will benefit from the project adding that according to the statistics, one quarter of girls aged between 15-19 have begun child-bearing.

Also, 5 up to 6 percent of girls continue with secondary schools compared to 12 up to 13 percent of boys completing the same year.

She however challenged the government to inculcate a culture of pursuing science subjects among girls from primary school level instead of secondary level.

"I commend the decision made by the government through its national budget 2020/21 to give more priority to young girls to pursue science subjects to bridge the gap between the boys and girls," she said. Uhuru Primary school in Dar es Salaam was opened as an integrated school for children with visual impairment. It was the first government school to specifically enroll children with disabilities.



**Children with disabilities have a right to make the best of the life they are born into to realise their dreams**



Longido district executive director Juma Mhina (4th-L) has breakfast alongside masons and technicians at the weekend during an inspection tour of the site where a new hospital for the district is being built. Photo: Correspondent Woinde Shizza

By Guardian Correspondent, Pemba

THE government will soon solve the challenge of accommodation facing personnel in the police, prisons, fire brigade and rescue services and immigration department countrywide.

This was revealed by the Deputy Minister for Home Affairs Hamad Masauni in Pemba when inspecting part of the 400 housing units of the countrywide housing project in various stages of construction.

The houses cost over 10bn/-, the money provided by President John Magufuli in April 2018 while in Arusha at the event to commemorate the late

## Govt to solve housing challenge for Home Affairs staff - Masauni

Abeid Amani Karume.

"The government is aware of accommodation challenges for the security personnel and the construction of the 400 houses has started countrywide, while others have already been completed, I like to give a pledge to our security personnel that accommodation challenge they face

will soon be past history," said Masauni.

He added: "In some regions the houses have already been built including those for Ukonga Prisons, for the immigration department at Iyumbu in Dodoma, police quarters at Medeli in Dodoma and other regions where many personnel have started living in the houses."

Some of the security personnel already living in completed houses in Pemba thanked the government for the accommodation that has greatly reduced the problem.

The housing project at Mfikiwa area in Chakechake, Pemba South Region has been completed and it involved 14 housing units for police staff.



Construction of business stalls well under way at Mwalimu Nyerere Fair Grounds in Dar es Salaam yesterday in readiness for this year's edition of the Dar es Salaam International Trade Fair. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

## Zanzibar govt launches its own construction company

By Guardian Reporter

ZANZIBAR President Dr Ali Mohamed Shein says his government will continue holding in high esteem indigenous building experts and that is why it has established its own construction company that has already started operations.

Dr Shein said the company focuses in the construction of better, modern buildings and will incorporate experts from the department of government brigades and when the need for foreign firms arises they will be accordingly invited.

He said the new state owned construction firm will start by building Binguni Hospital complex in Central District, Zanzibar South Region whose work will begin very soon.

He said the Zanzibar government was going with time despite the existence of some people who hate to see the government accomplishing good things for the people.

He also reiterated his annoyance to those who vandalised street lighting infrastructures in Pemba, saying those responsible were mentally deranged as a normal human being cannot deliberately destroy street lights that benefit all people.

Meanwhile, Dr Shein said results on oil and natural gas exploration were encouraging and a statement will soon

be issued after the Zanzibar Petroleum development Corporation (ZPDC) and RAK Gas of Ras Al Khaimah finish the work they had been assigned.

Dr Shein also hailed all government leaders for great achievements attained and in particular thanked the minister responsible and other ministry's officials.

He also congratulated the Zanzibar Utilities Regulatory Authority (ZURA) and in particular mentioned its work in the construction of Mangapwani Port and 31 houses for the people who had been shifted to make room for the port's construction.

The Minister for Lands, Housing, Water and Energy Salama About Talib, on behalf of officials and workers of the ministry, thanked and congratulated President Shein for the construction of the building.



**Zanzibar government was going with time despite the existence of some people who hate to see the government accomplishing good things for the people**

By Guardian Correspondent, Mbeya

## TARI-Uyole embarks on seeds production to reduce stunting

THE Tanzania Agricultural Research Institute Uyole Centre (TARI-Uyole) in Mbeya Region has embarked on the reduction of malnutrition in the country by producing quality seeds for the cultivation of maize, beans and potatoes that are nutritious especially to children.

Speaking in a special interview

with this paper, TARI-Uyole Director Dr Tulole Bucheyeki said already the production of the crops with the nutrients have started by many farmers especially those in the Southern Highlands Zone.

He said TARI-Uyole decided to come up with the strategy due to the

malnutrition problem in the country hence through these foods liked by many Tanzanians; the problem will be reduced to a great extent.

Dr Bucheyeki said in addition, TARI-Uyole will continue producing seeds from modern technology that withstand drought and pests as well as

increasing farmers yields.

The national coordinator on the beans crop at TARI-Uyole Dr Rose Mongi said they are conducting research on beans seeds of various types including those with nutrient content and have already came up with 42 types since research began.

He said among such seeds are those that can safely be used by people with gastric problems.

Dr Mongi said the current strategy is to continue experimenting on the seeds to withstand climate change that has been fast affecting the world in recent years to enable the seeds

withstand these changes.

TARI-Uyole coordinator of innovation Dr Ndbhemeye Mlengera said cultivation of beans and other crops such as maize also employ reserve farming technology that does not overwork the soil especially during this period of climate change.

# Govt called upon to co-opt refugees when preparing, implementing standards

By Correspondent Felix Andrew

THE government has been asked to involve all groups of people including refugees in the preparation and implementation of standards.

This was said in Dar es Salaam over the weekend by the Director General of Tanzania Bureau of Standards Dr Athuman Ngenya during a ceremony to award winners who participated in the ARSO 7th Continental Essay Competition.

The competition was conducted in March this year involving 52 students from various higher learning institutions in the country. It was prepared to mark the African day of Standardisation which was supposed to be held in March, but due to coronavirus was postponed until this month.

The African Day of Standardisation is celebrated as a means of raising more awareness among African regulators, industry, academia, consumers, policy makers and the entire African citizens on the benefits of Standardisation to Africa's Industrialisation, integration, transformation and sustainable development.

Dr Ngenya said in doing so the standards would help to improve products and services hence develop the economy, alleviate poverty, tighten security and remove challenges from new refugees which is a priority of the government.

He said the government has been doing a lot to reduce the number of refugees who are in the country through voluntary repatriation especially those from countries where there is enough peace.

Existence of refugees affect many host countries since they might pose an environmental or security threat.

The theme for this year is titled; "The role of Standardisation in resolving and addressing the socio-economic issues for the refugees, returnees and internally displaced persons and creating durable solutions to forced displacement in Africa.

He noted that the theme wants governments to work on challenges facing refugees in African continent. If left unsolved challenges from refugees would deter many countries to attain sustainable development.

Narrating, TBS boss said standards documents preparations are open and involve different stakeholders.

He added that once standards requirements are adhered to they help in production of quality

products for the community, hence protect health, security and environment and contribute to the growth of the economy.

Thus, standardisation is a way of putting in place practical solutions that are reproducible and harmonised, which could help host countries in their response to many of the issues they face when helping refugees.

This applies to relief items, record management and documentation systems, engineering, environmental management, public policy, societal security and safety, water and sanitation services, all subjects which are at the heart of refugee problems and can be applied to mass evacuation and community resilience and quality of life.

The management of TBS issued cash (ranging from 150,000/- to 1.5m/-) and certificate awards to ten students from different higher learning institutions who emerged winners during the past competition.

Speaking on behalf of others, Harriet Alexander, who was an overall winner thanked the management of TBS for the awards.

She asked students in higher learning institutions to continue participating in various contests run by different organisations so that they improve their knowledge and earn income.

"I am a student of Muhas, I have participated in this competition for the second time, now emerged a winner others can do so for their benefits," she said.

ARSO membership is drawn from African countries through their National Bureaus of Standards and currently, ARSO has 37-member states and activities are being implemented within the 2017-2022 ARSO Strategic Plan.

Under the ARSO Strategic Plan, members are to develop high-quality standards and related deliverables and ensure that African standards are adopted and applied as national and sub-regional standards.

The idea of an African Day of Standardisation was approved at the 49th ARSO Council held on 14th - 15th November, 2013 in Nairobi, Kenya, making emphasis on the national celebrations in ARSO member states and at continental level during the ARSO General Assembly events in June every year.

Later, March 21 each year was adopted as the African Day of Standardisation, due to the importance of the date in the Africa Integration Calendar, given the signing of the AfCFTA Agreement in Kigali, Rwanda by the African Heads of State.



Ismail Yilnaz (R), a director with Dar es Salaam's Feza Schools, assists a student of Mtambani Primary School in Bagamoyo District in carrying a bucket of water at the launch of a shallow well built with support from Feza Schools and Time to Help, an NGO. Photo: Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

By Guardian Correspondent, Babati

BABATI Water Supply and Sanitation Authority (BAWASA) has registered a loss of 164m/- due to recent prolonged seasonal rains that destroyed water infrastructures.

This was revealed by BAWASA Managing Director Eng Iddy Msuya when speaking to this paper about the effects of recent rains.

He said all dripping water sources were swept away by floods and added that the work now is to restore them to normalcy.

He said so far they have spent 68m/- to restore water supply service and that what remains is the purchase of water pipes.

He said the worst affected areas were Magugu, Gallapo and Babati town where pipes were carried away by floods water especially

# Agency records 164m/- loss due to heavy rains

from Mtuka and Baroa water sources that are now being rehabilitated.

Msuya said in some areas they used 3mm pipes but now these were being replaced by 6mm ones.

"Large areas still need pipes and we want to discuss with factories that manufacture them to pay them in installments," he said.

He said after the infrastructures were swept away by floods, water in the pipes was dirty but they spoke to their customers who

understood the problem, and added that by the end of July this year all the infrastructures will be restored.

A Babati resident Huruma Lazaro, said this year's seasonal rains were not normal but hailed BAWASA for their efforts to rectify the situation.

A Nangara resident Grace John, said the situation on the water infrastructure was pathetic and advised BAWASA to replace the pipes every three years.



Bananas aplenty at Dar es Salaam's Mabibo vegetable and mixed-fruits market, as found yesterday. The going price stood at between 15,000/- and 18,000/- per bunch of bananas, depending on size and quality. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

# African SMEs receive support from UK export credit agency

By Noelle McElhatton

THE UK government's export credit agency significantly increased the number of businesses it supported in the last financial year, its results for 2019-20, published over the weekend show.

UK Export Finance (UKEF) - part of the Department for International Trade - provided £4.4bn in support for UK exports, helping 339 UK companies trade with 69 countries - a 30% increase on the previous financial year.

Highlights from the report include 77% of the companies UKEF directly supported were SMEs, 88% of which were based outside of London, support for exports to Africa grew substantially in the year the African Investment Summit was hosted in the UK. UKEF support to the continent increased from £85m five years ago to £780 million in 2019-20

A wide range of exports benefited from UKEF support - from street furniture made in Belfast and sold to Dubai, to the Glasgow-based utilities contractor that helps Angola improve its national power supply.

Liz Truss, minister for trade, also said UKEF has a "critical role at the centre of the government's plan to power an export-led recovery".

The UK Export Finance 2020-24

Business Plan report sets out how the department is to provide export credit and trade finance as the UK forges its new independent trade path and as the country recovers from the impact of coronavirus.

The plan includes further support for SMEs and for businesses across all regions of the UK, building on the £2bn recently allocated by government for 'clean growth projects'.

IOE&IT director general, Marco Forgone, welcomed the progress UKEF has made, particularly its expanded support for SMEs.

He also called on UKEF to play a central role in the UK's economic recovery from the coronavirus pandemic by further increasing its support for SMEs.

"If we are to truly deliver an export-led recovery we need to ensure the national credit agency is aligned with the aspirations and needs of UK businesses," he said. "On behalf of our members and the wider exporting market we call on UKEF to increase its risk profile, both for finance and insurance, so that more SMEs are able to make use of the provision."

He also said the recently launched General Export Facility - working capital support for the UK's smallest exporters - will be a "great move forward".

# Africa women conference advocating ICT as tool for women empowerment

By Chizoba Ogbeche

CO-CONVENERS of the Africa Women Conference (AWC), Helpline Foundation for the Needy, Abuja, has identified Information and Communication Technology (ICT) as a tool for economic growth in view of the ravaging Covid-19 pandemic.

This was the consensus at the AWC 2nd edition of Exploring Growth Opportunities Series which was focused on women in media and the entertainment industry in Africa.

Speaking to journalists, Sunday in Abuja, on the outcome of the webinar with the theme: Deploying ICT in Repositioning Women in Media and Entertainment Industry for Growth, President/Founder, Helpline Foundation For The Needy, Abuja, Dr. Jumai Ahmadu, disclosed that panelists at the conference agreed that certain steps should be taken to address issues affecting women in the continent.

Ahmadu maintained that women must take advantage of information dissemination through the media and ICT as it was imperative

to advance any cause related or tailored towards women and girl child development.

According to her, during the deliberations panelists also agreed that training and equipping the Girl Child on ICT at a young age is imperative as the merit of ICT knowledge could boost their careers. "Africa women must take advantage of various online media platforms in getting information and also making extra monetary gains for those in the media sectors."

Speaking further she said: "For African women to be relevant in the media and entertainment

sectors, she must be ICT compliant."

Other issues raised at the conference she said included: "ICT has created room for self-development and capacity building in other online courses and African women should be encouraged in taking advantages of various online course platforms."

The women and girls right advocate said the conference, however, noted that though ICT has made online marketing of goods and services easy for women, but warned that women should be advised on the negative aspect on ICT

such as scammers, online ritualists, fraudsters among other vices, while calling on NGOs and CSOs to encourage and support rural women and the girl child on ICT trainings, provisions of ICT equipment and ICT mentoring.

The conference therefore called on women to be extremely smart and report all forms of abuse by individuals taking advantage of ICT tools, noting that despite the challenges of the Covid 19 pandemic on all sectors the ICT remained standing as the most sought after sector.

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Taking A New Look  
At The News  
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## Strong parliaments surely cornerstone of democracy

June 30 is the day designated to celebrate the International Day of Parliamentarism. In COVID-19 times, Parliaments and other government institutions are subject to the same social distancing measures as other public and private organisations. Yet, in a time of crisis, the role of parliament is more vital than ever to pass emergency laws, allocate resources and scrutinise government action.

Some parliaments are modifying laws and procedures to allow for remote working, some have continued meeting physically and some have recessed altogether. The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) is helping to facilitate inter-parliamentary coordination and solidarity by sharing examples of how parliaments can continue to legislate, debate and scrutinise the actions of government in a time of lockdown and social distancing.

Strong parliaments are a cornerstone of democracy. They represent the voice of the people, pass laws, allocate funds to implement laws and policies, and hold governments to account. They work to make sure that policies benefit all people, especially the most vulnerable.

Parliaments also link international and national agendas, ensuring that governments implement international treaties and agreements that they sign up to. They play a vital role in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) has been working closely with them to help build their capacity in doing so.

In countries emerging from conflict, robust parliaments can help make possible a peaceful transition to a functioning democracy by healing divisions in society through dialogue and cooperation.

The United Nations General Assembly, in its resolution recognised the role of parliaments in national plans and strategies and in ensuring greater transparency and accountability at national and global levels. It is also the date, in 1889, on which the Inter-

Parliamentary Union (IPU) – the global organisation of parliaments – was established.

This Day celebrates parliaments and the ways in which parliamentary systems of government improve the day-to-day lives of people the world over. It is also an opportunity for parliaments to take stock, identify challenges, and ways to address them effectively.

Member states have encouraged the growing involvement of parliamentarians and parliamentary organizations in the work of the United Nations. Parliamentary organisations play a leading role in promoting the engagement of parliaments in United Nations processes and activities. Indeed, there is a recognition that when parliamentarians communicate their concerns and aspirations to the United Nations, the Organisation is empowered to work more closely with the people of the world.

The IPU, as the world organisation of parliaments, connects national parliaments in order to promote greater transparency, accountability and participation at the global level. Along with other parliamentary organisations, IPU engages with the United Nations on activities that cover a broad range of issues, including peace and security, human rights and sustainable development.

Parliaments and parliamentary organisations played an active role throughout the negotiations on the post-2015 development framework, advocating strongly, for instance, for the inclusion of goals related to democratic governance. Goal 16 of the Sustainable Development Goals is dedicated to the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, access to justice for all, and building effective, accountable institutions at all levels.

Following the finalisation of the 2030 Agenda, the focus of cooperation between the United Nations, national parliaments and parliamentary organizations has now firmly shifted towards implementation.

## Asteroid Day: What can we do to save planet Earth from catastrophic events?

ASTEROIDS are small, rocky objects that orbit the Sun. Although asteroids orbit the Sun like planets, they are much smaller than planets. The United Nations has proclaimed it to be observed globally on June 30 every year in its resolution. Asteroid Day aims to raise awareness about asteroids and what can be done to protect the Earth, its families, communities, and future generations from a catastrophic event.

International Asteroid Day is an annual global event which is held on the anniversary of the Siberian Tunguska event that took place on June 30, 1908, the most harmful known asteroid-related event on Earth in recent history. The Tunguska event was a large explosion that occurred near the Podkamennaya Tunguska River in Yeniseysk Governorate (now Krasnoyarsk Krai), Russia, on the morning of 30 June 1908.

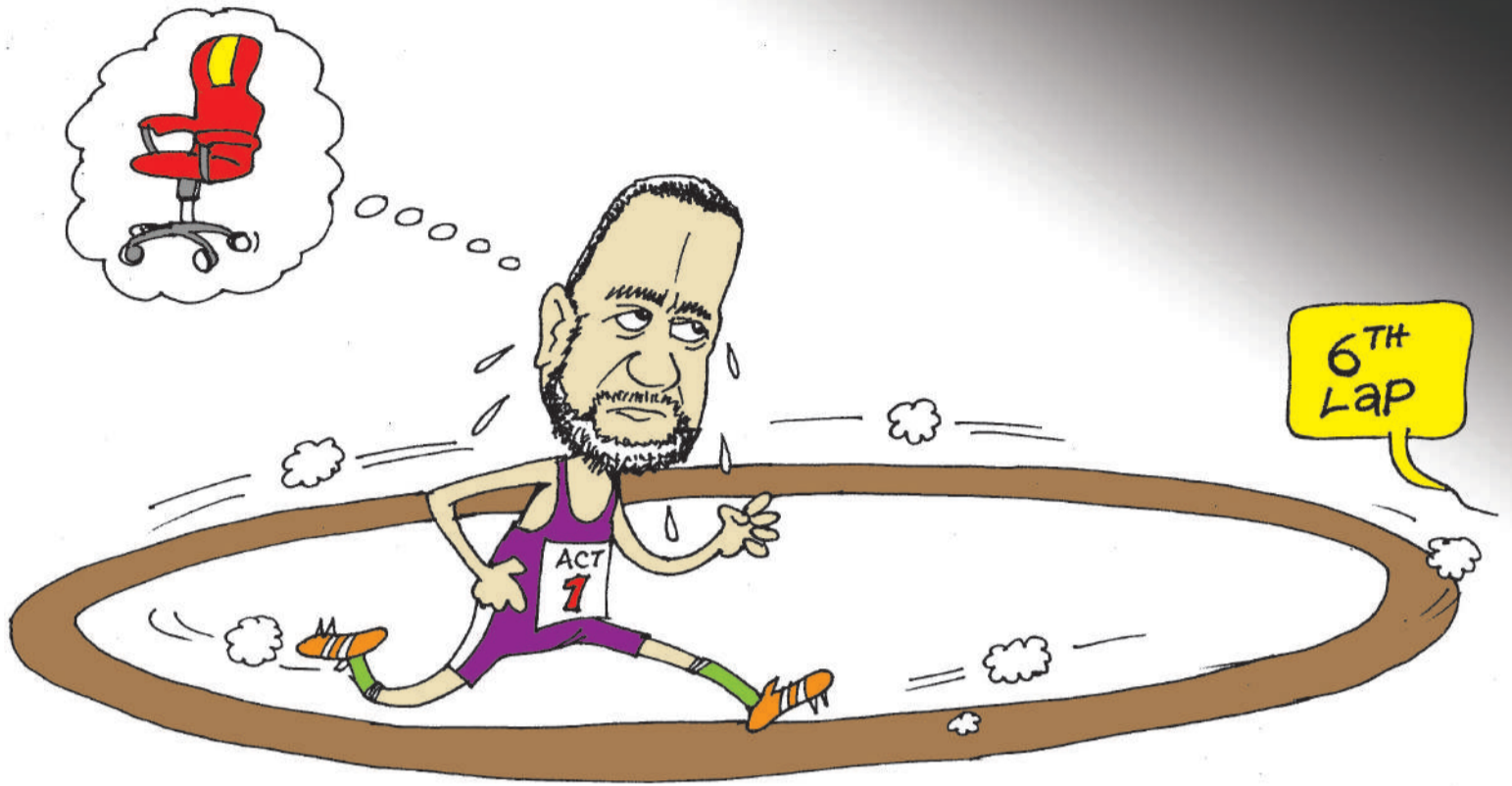
A potentially hazardous object is a near-Earth object – either an asteroid or a comet – with an orbit that can make close approaches to the Earth and large enough to cause significant regional damage in the event of impact. They are defined as having a minimum orbital intersection distance with Earth. The known potentially hazardous objects are not an impact threat over the next 100 years.

As of June 2020 there are 2,093 known potentially hazardous asteroids. Most of the discovered potentially hazardous asteroids are Apollo asteroids. A potentially hazardous object can be known not to be a threat to Earth for the next 100 years or more. Asteroid Day was officially launched on December 3, 2014. The

workgroup of Asteroid Day created a declaration called "100X Declaration", which appeals to all scientists and technologists who are supporting the idea of saving the Earth from asteroids, but not only specialists are asked to sign, everyone can sign this declaration. Today, the 100X Declaration has been signed by more than 22,000 private citizens.

More than 1M asteroids have the potential to impact Earth and through all the available telescopes worldwide. The 100X Declaration calls for increasing the asteroid discovery rate to 100,000 (or 100x) per year within the next 10 years. The more we learn about asteroid impacts, the clearer it became that the human race has been living on borrowed time. "Asteroid Day and the 100X Declaration are ways for the public to contribute to an awareness of the Earth's vulnerability and the realisation that Asteroids hit Earth all the time. Asteroid Day would be the vehicle to garner public support to increase our knowledge of when asteroids might strike and how we can protect ourselves.

The main three goals are: Employ available technology to detect and track Near-Earth Asteroids that threaten human populations via governments and private and philanthropic organisations; A rapid hundred-fold acceleration of the discovery and tracking of Near-Earth Asteroids to 100,000 per year within the next ten years; Global adoption of Asteroid Day, heightening awareness of the asteroid hazard and our efforts to prevent impacts, on June 30 - With the United Nations recognition, this action item has been achieved.



By Oscar Van Heerden

ISN'T it convenient that we declare war on statues instead of war on the imperialist system and all that it has brought about? Let's rather focus on how we undo the vestiges of slavery, colonialism and in our local case, apartheid.

As I observe the aftermath of the Black Lives Matter protests all over the world, witnessing how anger is being vented towards various statues of mostly white men who have contributed to blacks finding themselves in this historically unfortunate position globally, I cannot but wonder why the attention is not focused on the right thing instead, and that being the imperialist system. Meaning, the system of extending the rule or authority of an empire or nation over foreign countries, or of acquiring the holding colonies and dependencies. After all, you are in the First World as opposed to my Third World because of what?

Now, I am the first to agree with Kalpana Wilson when she says: "Just as the pulling down of Confederate statues in the southern US amid protests against police violence is an expression of the continuities between the contemporary racialised police and prison system and racial slavery and is essential to an abolitionist practice for today, the targeting of statues of slave traders and colonial white supremacists in Britain reflects that this wave of protests is connecting the horrors of police racism in North America, the UK and Europe with how the violence of race and white supremacy has been and remains today embedded in global structures of capital accumulation."

Isn't it convenient that we declare war on statues instead of war on the imperialist system? How does one undo the vestiges of slavery, colonialism and in our local case, apartheid? Isn't that worth fighting for, but perhaps this sort of struggle cuts too close to the bone? Perhaps the ill-gotten fortunes and surpluses that now allow you to receive free healthcare, grants for simply being pregnant, free education and so much more, perhaps that is too difficult to give up?

You cannot deny that all that opulence and wealth was obtained, and made possible on the back of what? Slavery, colonialism and apartheid. And who were the enforcers and/or perpetrators of such a system? The very persons whose statues you now want to desecrate and destroy or send off to museums. That's a bit fresh is it not? Or is it a matter of misplaced loyalty or simply misdirection?

Why can't the West together with Africans design a Marshall Plan for the continent? Why can't we take all the current money in the coffers of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and World Bank and rebuild, reconstruct and develop Africa? We did it in Europe after WWII, did we not?

If you really care about black lives,

## Beware the statue wars: Mandela could be next



Oscar van Heerden

then attack that imperialist system, march and protest for unconditional investments in Africa and the Third World, unconditional aid, infrastructure investments and compensation for all past injustices. Slave owners were compensated generously when they had to forfeit their ownership of slaves because it was a loss of revenue, so why can't we Africans not be generously compensated for our loss of earnings and fortunes over the centuries?

Why can't the West together with Africans design a Marshall Plan for the continent? Why can't we take all the current money in the coffers of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and World Bank and rebuild, reconstruct and develop Africa? We did it in Europe after WWII, did we not?

In the article by Wilson for Open Democracy UK, with regards to calls that Churchill must fall, the author had the following to say and I concur: "Race" – a concept both invented and horrifically real in its effects – and capital were inseparable at their inception and remain so. Of course, it is essential to know – and to teach in schools – that not only cities like Bristol and London, Glasgow and Manchester, but the whole edifice of British capitalism was built upon the profits of slavery and colonialism.

"And as Guyanese Marxist thinker Walter Rodney's seminal 'How Europe

Nazis, including Communists and Social Democrats, dissenting clergy, resistance fighters, prisoners of war, Slavic peoples, and many individuals from the artistic communities whose opinions and works Hitler condemned."

The historic importance of Churchill's tenacity and determination in the face of opposition even from within his own party – surely we must also credit and acknowledge him for this? Insofar as Cecil John Rhodes goes, his money is now doing so much good, is it not? Should we not also celebrate this?

And then we have our own Nelson Mandela, standing tall in front of our Union Buildings, marching at Cape Town's V&A Waterfront as a Nobel Peace Prize winner and indeed in Sandton Square in Johannesburg. The father of our nation, we fondly call him. He who through his generosity and forgiveness could bury the hatchet towards his oppressors and convinced us all, black and white in our country, to reconcile and move forward as a nation. This was not an easy task and yes, none of us is under any illusion that this wasn't a serious compromise. Negotiation, after all, we were told at the time, is a process of give and take. Did we do it properly and could we have optimised our position in those negotiations? Probably yes, but our civil political rights at the time were our main focus.

Perhaps you are aware that already we have segments in our society, especially from the younger, more "woke" and born-free generation that are of the opinion that Mandela sold them out as black people. And I'm here using the term black in the broader sense, black-African, black-coloured and black-Indian. And so, it is conceivable that in the next few years, these same dissatisfied and disaffected persons will demand that Mandela must fall.

We must have an appreciation of history. It is important because it allows us to understand our past (good and bad), which in turn allows us to understand our present. It can indeed provide us with insight into our cultures of origin as well as cultures with which we might be less familiar.

Churchill, a racist, yes, but he did also defeat the Nazis, did he not? I read recently that "50 years after the end of World War II, few people are aware that Jews were not the only victims of the Nazis. In addition to six million Jews, more than five million non-Jews were murdered under the Nazi regime. Among them were Gypsies, Jehovah's Witnesses, homosexuals, blacks, the physically and mentally disabled, political opponents of the





# Accommodating special needs of children in infrastructure design crucial

By Correspondent Crispin Gerald

“EVERY day, me and my friends spend one hour on the road to and from school.

We cross a road that is full of motor vehicles and motorcycles.”

“We always face difficulties when we want to cross the road to get to school earlier, some drivers, ride at a high speed so we can't cross the road while other drivers don't obey to zebra crossing,” said Rajabu Hussein a standard six student at Mapambano Primary School, located at Kinondoni District, in Dar es Salaam region.

He said: “though we are aware of how to cross the road on our own, sometimes we are obliged to ask for support from elders to help us crossing the road while holding our hands.”

“We ask the government and responsible authorities to assist us to have safer roads far from any fatalities,” Hussein explained.

The global scenario depicts that road crashes are the leading cause of death for children and young adults aged 5-29 years globally, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO) Global Status Report on Road Safety 2018.

According to the Child Health Initiative activity and progress report 2016-2019, nearly 700 children die every day in road crashes, thousands more are seriously hurt.

It is reported that more than 2 million children miss out on education each year through death or injury in road traffic crashes. The world report shows that at least 80 percent of children walk to school using roads that contribute to millions of deaths.

Children walk for at least one kilometre to school on roads characterised by reckless drivers.

“Road crashes devastate families, impose huge costs on health systems, exacerbate poverty and reduce the life chances of children,”

Interviewed executive director for FIA Foundation Saul Billingsley said lack of leadership and political commitment to ensure

children are protected while on the road, is one among the challenges facing many governments to make sure that children are safe when going to school.

He said it is unfortunate to see leaders and politicians are reluctant to react to the challenges that contribute to the increase of road traffic fatalities.

The director made the comment in an interview during the 3rd Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety which took place in February in Stockholm, Sweden.

Billingsley added that that is one among the main challenges which hindered smooth implementation of the decade of action for Road Safety.

“Still there are a lot of things to improve to ensure that proper infrastructures including safe crossings, side-walks and road signs are made available on the road to make it safer for children,” he explained.

“It is astonishing to see a lot of money is spent to build schools, hiring teachers and purchasing school infrastructures, while neglecting the safety of the children on the road,” Saul explained.

“We need to see that urgent and serious actions are put in place by governments to address this leading killer of young people,” the director insisted in an interview.

The actions we set in this 2030 manifesto will not only save lives, but will also contribute to a transformation of our streets which helps to reduce traffic, enable walking and cycling, and tackle air quality and climate change,” he said.

“More investment in the essential infrastructures both in schools and in the streets, to ensure child protection is highly encouraged to specifically end child deaths from road crashes,” Billingsley emphasized.

A survey conducted by the International Road Assessment Programme (IRAP) to nearly 250,000 kilometres of roads in 60 countries, found that more than 80 percent of roads on which pedestrians were present and traffic flowed at more than 40 km/h had



Road safety has a direct link to children's ability to get to school. Without safe places to cross roads and measures to reduce vehicle speed, many children arrive late, while others may be killed or injured. Photo: Correspondent Crispin Gerald

no formal sidewalks. The proportion was more than 90 percent in sub-Saharan Africa, 88 percent with cyclists and speeds of more than 40 kilometers an hour lacked separate bicycle facilities.

Children and adolescents are one of the most vulnerable groups to use the road. With so little protection provided it is little wonder that more than 3000 children have unfinished journeys every day.

Research by AMEND International, has shown that introducing sidewalks, speed reductions and traffic calmed crossings can reduce serious injuries by at least 25 percent at a cost of around US\$ 20,000 per school.

## The situation in Tanzania

In Tanzania, a report from the Police released in 2018 shows that, on average, two children die each month and four others are injured in road traffic.

“Young children are impulsive, easily distracted, and have poor judgment of speed and distance. They are not good at assessing risk. This makes them vulnerable to being killed or injured on the road,” according to the report on

the improvement of road safety in Tanzania Mainland prepared by the Land Transport Regulatory Authority (LATRA).

Statistics show that in 2013, 106 children under the age of 13 died in road crashes, and another 226 were injured.

The report states that, teaching children how to use road safety not only gives them practical skills, but also helps build positive, safe, caring attitudes that will serve them well throughout their lives.

“When teaching young children, the emphasis will be on building awareness and equipping them with road crossing skills, whereas older children should be taught how to assess and manage risks,” the report said.

## A survey conducted by AMEND International in Tanzania, found that:

Dar es Salaam city, the commercial and busiest city across East Africa, is urbanizing at a staggering rate. The city is in the throes of a population explosion - currently just over 4 million, it is predicted to expand by 50 percent by 2025 according to the African Development Bank. In such an environment, road traffic injury features all too prominently in the mosaic of public health threats, yet the immense burden it imposes on children and families is barely recognized.

Road safety has a direct link to children's ability to get to school. Without safe places to cross roads and measures to reduce the speed of vehicles, many children arrive late.

Others may be killed or injured. Some miss exams or key parts of their education, and others never recover to be able to return to school.

For children in Dar es Salaam, the journey to school

is dangerous, as they face a chaotic mix of fast moving vehicles and a lack of safe routes for pedestrians. Everyone knows someone who has been killed or injured by a vehicle.

In order to cross safely, children have been trained to ask for help to cross the road, and most do so. In some areas crossing patrols have been established.

Sometimes this is in response to a serious crash, and are organised by older children (aged 11 to 13) wearing reflective jackets. Yet most schools don't have crossing patrols - only around 10 of the 400 state primary schools in Dar es Salaam have them, and these only cover the roads directly outside the schools.

“It is recommended that cities, road authorities and citizens examine the routes frequently traveled by children to attend school and for other purposes, identify needs, including changes that encourage active modes such as walking and cycling and incorporate safe system principles to eliminate risks along these routes.”

“Our children are crying out for actions to protect them from the biggest threat to their lives, dangerous roads,” said Zoleka Mandela, ambassador for Child Health Initiative IHI.

“I implore our leaders to stop paying lip service and start investing energy and money into the simple solutions that can save our children,” she said.

## The outcome of the 3rd Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety

In February this year, the World Ministers gathered in Stockholm, Sweden for a Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety organised by the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the Swedish government. In collaboration with the International Centre for Journal-

ists (ICFJ).

Themed; achieving global goals 2030; the conference which got attention of more than 1,000 delegates from 140 countries, deliberately adopted a joint ministerial declaration dubbed; The Stockholm Declaration.

The declaration among others, called upon member states and the international community to address the unacceptable burden of road traffic injury on children and young people as a priority, increasing political commitment, by ensuring the Global Strategy for Women's children and adolescent's health delivers necessary action on road safety.

The conference gave a valuable opportunity to stakeholders to put road safety in a global perspective and collaborate in the interests of reducing or eliminating road traffic fatalities and serious injuries.

The Academic Expert Group for the 3rd Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety, recommended that; cities, road authorities and citizens examine the routes frequently traveled by children to attend school and for other purposes, identify needs, including changes that encourage active modes such as safe system principles to eliminate risks along these routes.

The report said that; our children are the most valuable societal asset and we cannot look into the future without special consideration for their welfare. This principle underlies the development of the United Nations declaration of children's rights.

Infrastructure design needs to accommodate the special needs of children, particularly the younger ones, who cannot be expected to understand and comply with non-intuitive rules or behaviours.

Routes travelled by children should use designs such as separated pedestrian walkways to limit risk exposure and include safe crosswalks where children are likely to feel the need to cross the road.

Schools have an important responsibility to analyse, propose and support implementation of safe routes to the schools.

By Gregg Gonsalves

THROUGHOUT these first months of bad news about the Covid-19 pandemic, I've held out hope that we would rise to the occasion and get a grip on the epidemic. Other countries have done it. Why not us?

But April was the month I gave up that hope. Yes, the number of hospitalisations in New York City seems to be edging down - and yes, social distancing seems to be having an effect there and elsewhere around the US. Progress is happening as a patchwork for sure. But the bottom fell out of all this starting a few weeks ago.

The way out of this epidemic in the US has been well articulated now by many different actors. Experts in think-tanks on the left and right and governors both Republican and Democrat have sung this four-part mantra in unison: Get the cases down for two weeks or more, scale up testing, trace contacts of those who test positive and isolate them from those still susceptible to infection.

Had this kind of classic approach to public health been the way we had started this saga, we'd be in better shape today. Now there is only one way forward - and it's this very same path, even if adopted late in the game. Social distancing can begin to end once we know the contours of what we're facing out there: the scale and scope of lingering infections in the community; otherwise, we're flying blind.

But that's not how we're doing things. When President Trump tweeted “LIBERATE MINNESOTA!”, “LIBERATE MICHIGAN!” and “LIBERATE VIRGINIA, and save your great 2nd Amendment. It is under siege!” on Friday, April 17, the die was cast: it was a clarion call to his supporters to resist, with arms, the social distancing that would be necessary.

This was followed by the less spectacular though far more fateful pronouncements from the White House on testing for SARS-CoV-2. Despite the pleas for help in scaling up testing

# Trump will let the Covid-19 pandemic bring the US to its knees

from governors around the country, even Trump's science advisors began to suggest that the entreaties were overblown and we had all the testing capacity we needed to start opening up the economy in the near future.

We are all hoping for a happy ending in what is emerging as one of the greatest challenges this country has ever faced. Things don't look good.

Georgia. Florida. Texas. Tennessee. All these states began to reopen, while others laid out plans to reopen in the near future and scale back social distancing, without testing in place, regardless of the consequences.

On April 30, federal social distancing guidelines expired. The president has no plans to renew them. Instead, those working towards the president's reelection have been stoking more and more anti-social distancing, pro-coronavirus-spread protests.

You don't need mathematical models to predict what happens when you relax social distancing before you get the epidemic under control or understand the extent of the problems you face. Doing so will make things worse. No expert will tell you differently.

Except in the United States in 2020, expertise has no role in the response to Covid-19; it's all about the gut feelings of the man in the White House and his loyalists in Congress and in governors' mansions across the land.

No one treats this as lunacy, recklessness and self-destructiveness on a national scale. To do that, we would have to look in the mirror and see the country we've become rather than rely on the myths that we live by day by day.

It doesn't have to be this way: we have the capacity, the know-how and the will to survive this pandemic with far less carnage and death, whether you enumerate it in deaths or in gross domestic product.

It's no moon shot for American in-



President Donald Trump speaks at an event on protecting senior citizens in the US. Photo: Win McNamee/Getty Images

dustry to scale up testing, from the PCR primers and RNA extraction kits to the test tubes and swabs we need. We have plenty of talented and newly unemployed people who could be recruited to perform the tests, do the contact tracing, and help people navigate the practicalities of isolation and quarantine.

Instead, we have governors more loyal to the president than their duties to protect their own constituents opening up their states and exacerbat-

ing the epidemic. The virus doesn't respect state borders, and their actions will undermine not only containment efforts in their own states but across the entire country.

Meanwhile, as a bipartisan coalition of governors in other states tries to do the right thing, they face the headwinds of a federal government that has no interest in treating or stopping Covid-19 as a national project - and a president who has pinned his political hopes on sowing chaos amid the

response to the epidemic.

We are all hoping for a happy ending in what is emerging as one of the greatest challenges this country has ever faced. We're in the middle of the story now, and things don't look good for the outcome, for ordinary Americans hoping that this too will pass.

Andrew Slavitt, President Obama's health care czar, earlier this year called our inability to respond in a timely and effective manner to this pandemic the greatest US public health failure in

a century. A few months later, it looks like a far more grave disaster, an epitaph for a country that let a virus bring it to its knees.

A feature in GEN, a Medium publication about politics, power, and culture. Gregg Gonsalves is an assistant professor in the Department of the Epidemiology of Microbial Diseases at Yale School of Public Health.

## Germany provides USD 5.9million to protect African farmers with climate risk insurance

BERLIN

AS the COVID-19 pandemic continues to spread into countries already dealing with the impacts of drought, economic crises and conflict, the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) has provided USD 5.9 million to ensure that the UN World Food Programme (WFP) can continue to protect 1.2 million vulnerable African farmers with climate risk insurance.

"This donation comes at a crucial time. The COVID-19 pandemic keeps colliding with the climate crisis. While the immediate priority of many countries is to protect people and prevent the spread of COVID-19, it is essential to have safety nets in place that protect vulnerable people from the double threat of COVID and climate impacts.

Heatwaves, floods, storms and droughts are compounding the economic and public health effects of the pandemic, putting an additional burden on overstretched health services," says Gernot Lagonda, WFP Chief of Climate and Disaster Risk Reduction Programmes. "Germany's donation will enable these countries to strengthen their safety nets and manage two hazards at the same time."



With funding from BMZ's emergency COVID-19 response, WFP will be able to purchase policies for Burkina Faso, The Gambia, Mali, Mauritania and Zimbabwe for the 2020/21 agricultural season.

If these countries experience climate shocks that damage crops this year or

the next, the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic will be compounded and less food will be available in the markets, which could lead to food crises. This will create a situation where countries are faced with having to feed more people while at the same time trying to control

the spread of COVID-19.

"This is why this insurance could support 'double resilience' for vulnerable people. It is protecting them from both hunger and the impacts of COVID-19 on market access," said WFP Mauritania Country Director Nacer Benalleg. "We can act much fast-

er to help our partner government at a difficult time when the countries of the world need to support each other. If a drought occurs next season, having a payout from our climate risk insurance policy would free up budgetary resources that Mauritania would have otherwise needed to split between food security and health responses."

This German donation will fund insurance coverage for around 108,000 people in Mauritania; 175,000 people in Burkina Faso; 45,000 people in the Gambia; 745,000 people in Mali and 266,000 people in Zimbabwe.

The insurance scheme is part of the African Union's African Risk Capacity (ARC) - innovative risk management and resilience-building institution that helps African Union Member States manage climate and disaster risk and adapt to climate change. The ARC Member States purchase index-based drought insurance that guarantees payouts if rains fall below certain levels. Financial help can reach affected small-scale farmers immediately after the failed harvest. ARC is also of-

fering governments comprehensive technical support for disaster preparedness and disaster risk management.

ARC Replica coverage is an insurance product offered by ARC Ltd to the World Food Programme (WFP) and the Start Network - a network of over 40 humanitarian aid organizations - to complement the insurance policies purchased by African states. As Replica partners, WFP and Start Network can increase the ARC insurance coverage of eligible ARC Member States by purchasing a 'Replica Policy'.

As part of the InsuResilience Vision 2025, Germany and the other G7 countries have committed to ensuring 500 million poor and vulnerable people are covered against climate and disaster shocks by pre-arranged finance and insurance mechanisms by 2025. ARC Replica is a vehicle to support the achievement of this goal.

The funds will be channelled from BMZ through the government-owned development bank Kreditanstalt fuer Wiederaufbau (KfW).

## Tanzania among 26 African countries set to gain from newly signed pacts on cancer medicines

By Special Correspondent

TANZANIA is one of the 26 African countries which are set to benefit from the newly signed agreements to expand access to 20 lifesaving cancer medicines for Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia.

The American Cancer Society (ACS) and the Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI) yesterday announced the agreements with pharmaceutical companies Pfizer, Novartis and Mylan to expand access to 20 lifesaving cancer treatments in 26 countries in sub-Saharan Africa and Asia. Purchasers are expected to save an average of 59 percent for medicines procured through the agreements.

Other countries included in the agreements are Botswana, Cameroon, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe, in Africa; and Vietnam, India, and Myanmar in Asia. Oncologists, government officials, and nonprofit organizations in many of these countries contributed to these agreements by sharing information and feedback to the

CHAI team.

"With the rapidly growing burden of cancer in Africa, it is crucial that we improve and expand access to high-quality, affordable treatment. These agreements build on those announced in 2017 that have already delivered substantial savings and increased treatment availability in several countries, including Nigeria. By targeting the treatment needed for the cancers that cause the most deaths, these new agreements will help us to improve on quality of lives and close the mortality gap for Africans with cancer," said Professor Isaac Adelewe, co-chair, African Cancer Coalition and former Health Minister of Nigeria.

Medications included in the agreements cover recommended regimens for 27 types of cancer and enable complete chemotherapy regimens for the three cancers that cause the most deaths in Africa—breast, cervical, and prostate. These cancers are highly treatable and account for 38 percent of cancers in the countries covered in the agreements. The new agreements include both chemotherapies and endocrine therapies aligned to evidence-

based guidelines harmonized for sub-Saharan Africa, and expand access to additional formulations, including those essential for treating childhood cancer.

"With cancer cases increasing at such a rapid rate in sub-Saharan Africa, access to affordable cancer treatment that meets the quality standards set by a stringent regulatory authority is imperative," said William Cance, MD FACS, Chief Medical and Scientific Officer, American Cancer Society.

"This collaboration has the potential to drastically impact access to care and save countless lives," he said. Sub-Saharan Africa's cancer burden is significant and growing. In 2018, there were an estimated 811,000 new cases of cancer and 534,000 deaths from cancer in the region. Cancer patients in sub-Saharan Africa are twice as likely to die as those in the United States, often due to late diagnosis and lack of access to treatment. Based on population aging alone, annual cancer deaths in sub-Saharan Africa are projected to almost double by 2030. The new agreements reach 23 countries in Africa, covering 74 percent of the annual cancer cases.

The new initiative includes Pfizer, Novartis, and Mylan, and will expand access to the priority medications and formulations in the agreements to additional countries.

All of the medications included in the agreements meet the quality standards set by a stringent regulatory authority such as the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) or the European Medicines Agency (EMA). These medicines will be available for purchase at newly and independently negotiated prices in the designated countries, and the companies have committed to monitoring the impact of their respective agreements with CHAI.

This new Cancer Access Partnership is an initiative of Allied Against Cancer and an expansion of the Chemotherapy Access Partnership (ACS and CHAI) began working together in 2015 to improve care and treatment of cancer in sub-Saharan Africa, working with governments and cancer treatment institutions to address market inefficiencies, improve supply chains, and increase procurement to ensure quality medications were available at affordable prices. This collaboration has

shown that access to high-quality cancer treatments can be expanded in a sustainable way.

Dr Iain Barton, Chief Executive Officer of CHAI stated: "While we have made strides in increasing access to lifesaving cancer treatments in sub-Saharan Africa over the last several years, there is much more work to be done. This collaboration is a significant step in delivering high-quality cancer treatment to more patients, bringing us closer to equitable cancer treatment for all people."

In 2017, Allied Against Cancer members ACS and CHAI announced agreements with Pfizer and Cipla to expand access to 16 essential cancer treatment medications in six countries in sub-Saharan Africa.

The market access agreements secured competitive prices, allowing these governments to realize substantial savings and improve the quality and quantity of treatment available. As a result of the agreements, several African governments and hospitals increased their commitment to procuring necessary cancer medicines by using the cost savings to increase the volumes of medicines procured, setting up

innovative systems to supply high-quality cancer medications, and increasing budgets for cancer care and treatment. Countries that accessed products through the agreements saved an average of 56 percent.

As a result, patients have new levels of access to quality chemotherapies in nearly all of the countries included in the original agreements. Three new countries were added in November 2019.

"Since entering into partnership with CHAI and ACS in 2017, we have seen the positive impact that sustainable access to quality, affordable cancer medicines can have on patients in vulnerable communities in Africa," said Rhulani Nhlani, Pfizer Cluster Lead for sub-Saharan Africa and Country Manager, South Africa.

"We remain committed to this model that helps to reduce the overwhelming burden on patients and healthcare systems, and we are pleased to be able to expand our chemotherapy offerings under the program to better serve the needs of patients."

"Novartis is reimagining medicine and access to healthcare in sub-Saharan Africa with the patient at the center of everything

we do," said Racey Muchilwa, Head of Novartis sub-Saharan Africa.

"This agreement is an important step to provide lifesaving medicines to more cancer patients across Africa. Having personally seen the growing toll cancer takes on the patients and many affected families in Africa, I am very excited about this collaboration of multiple stakeholders to dramatically improve access to cancer medicines in many countries."

"Mylan is proud to join CHAI, ACS and this important group of industry stakeholders to help expand access to critical medicines for oncology patients. Mylan has a long-standing commitment to support those impacted by non-communicable diseases, including cancer, which significantly impact low- and middle-income countries.

We look forward to continuing to do our part by expanding access to treatment through initiatives like the Cancer Access Partnership and working with all involved in the healthcare system to help serve the community," said Rakesh Bamzai, President, India and Emerging Markets, Mylan.

## Uganda becomes first African state to submit REDD+ results and paves way for payments

By Kiran Pandey

UGANDA has become the first African country to submit results for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD+) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

REDD+ is a mechanism developed by the parties to the UNFCCC to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation.

The results submission to the UNFCCC has paved the way for potential results-based payments to the country, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) said on June 24, 2020.

Results-based payments comprise the final REDD+ phase. It provides financial incentives to developing countries that prove they stopped deforestation during a certain period of time. This is done through rigorous UN-backed technical evaluations.

Uganda claimed it reduced emissions by 8,070,694 tonnes of carbon dioxide for 2015-2017 in a document prepared by its Ministry of Water and Environment, the REDD+ Secretariat

and National Forestry Authority.

The REDD+ results showed deforestation reduced to 28,095 hectares (ha) per year over a two-year result period (2015-17) from a 50,147 ha per year average over a 15-year reference period (2000-15).

This meant a 44 per cent reduction in the country's rate of deforestation annually between 2015 and 2017, compared to estimates for 2000-15 and the protection of 20,052 ha every year on an average during 2015-2017.

These estimates were drawn on data collected by the National Forest Authority.

One concern was that Uganda's forested area could have disappeared within the coming century, if deforestation was not reigned in.

The country's forest cover had depleted to 8 per cent from 24 per cent in the 1990s, largely attributed to human encroachment, including for charcoal, timber and agriculture.

The document submitted by the government will help Uganda receive funds through the Green Climate Fund's forest conservation scheme.



Brazil, which received \$96.5 million under the results-based payments, was the first recipient country.

REDD+ in Uganda

In Uganda, the REDD+ program forms a part of the country's National Climate Change Policy that aims for a harmonised and coordinated approach towards a climate-resilient and low-carbon development path for sustainable development.

The country had launched its REDD+ programme in 2013. In 2017, Uganda presented its first forest reference emission level of histori-

cal average emissions from deforestation between 2000 and 2015 as required under measurement, reporting and verification for REDD+ activities.

The REDD+ strategy, launched in 2017, included developing plans and options for forest management to reduce carbon emissions and maintain valuable ecosystem services such as biodiversity, water supply, soil protection and wealth creation for sustainable livelihoods.

The Government of Uganda then decided to assess the country's performance in reducing emissions for 2015-17 and to further improve esti-

mates of forest change and associated emission factors.

Significant for Africa

The submission of the results are a significant development on REDD+ for Africa, said the FAO.

This will encourage other African countries to reduce carbon emissions by decreasing deforestation and forest degradation.

Achieving REDD+ results in the continent is challenging, as there are other development priorities – with agriculture, mining, energy and forestry – driving deforestation, according to the FAO.

Africa had the greatest annual rate of net forest loss, at 3.9 million ha, across the world in this decade. The rate of net forest loss also increased in Africa from 1990 till this year, according to the FAO's Global Forest Resources Assessment 2020.

Supporting African countries through all three REDD+ phases – readiness, implementation and result-based actions – by providing tools and analysis of how to design, implement and measure the results of REDD+ action is key to reversing these trends. This will, in turn, position Africa as the forest champion of the next decade, said FAO.

# Into the fog: How Britain lost track of the coronavirus

By **STEPHEN GREY, ANDREW MACASKILL, RYAN MCNEILL, STEVE STECKLOW and TOMMY WILKES**

To tackle the invisible virus, doctors and health specialists first needed to find it. But with few tests, little contact tracing and a government culture of secrecy, they lost sight of the enemy.

ON Friday, Feb. 21, Duncan Selbie, chief executive of Public Health England, was in a cheerful mood. It was near the end of the school half-term holiday.

He wrote on an official blog that there had been no new positive cases of the new coronavirus that week in the United Kingdom. It was a "testament," he said, "to the robust infection control measures" and the "diagnostic and testing work" at laboratories nationwide.

Selbie, who joked when he took his then £185,000-a-year job in 2013 that his public health credentials could be fitted "on a postage stamp," headed a government agency with a mission to prepare for and respond to public health emergencies. He was now facing an epochal one.

Public Health England (PHE) is a cornerstone of the UK's state-run health system; Selbie reports directly to the government's health minister, Matt Hancock.

The agency is much smaller and has a lower profile than the vast National Health Service (NHS) that oversees Britain's hospitals, clinics and general practitioners, providing healthcare to all. Public Health England's 5,500 staff have an important supporting role running laboratories, developing tests for new infections and managing outbreaks in England, home to 56 million of the UK's 67 million people.

Even as Selbie posted his blog, all was not well. Reuters estimates that across the UK between 1,500 and 5,000 people may already have been infected with the coronavirus. The estimate is based on current scientific assessments of the fatality rate from COVID-19, the disease caused by the virus, and an average interval from infection to death of between 18 and 23 days.

Within five weeks of Selbie's blog, Britain had hit the peak of an outbreak that has caused at least 43,000 deaths so far, according to the official toll. This compares to 35,000 in Italy, the first country in Europe to be severely affected, or nearly 9,000 in Germany, where, in the early days, the spread of infection appeared similar to Britain. With the exception only of Belgium, Britain has the highest per-capita mortality rate from COVID-19 among major economies, Reuters data show.

As Reuters has reported previously, Britain was slow to impose lockdown measures. That delay was costly. Professor Neil Ferguson, a disease modelling expert from Imperial College, London, has said that introducing lockdown measures a week earlier "would have reduced the final death toll by at least half."

Now, a Reuters investigation reveals further missteps and failures by officials and government agencies, including Selbie's Public Health England, in testing, tracking and tracing. Among decisions that doctors and epidemiologists say cost lives were:

- Failure to build up capacity to perform mass tests for COVID-19.
- Deciding on a narrower definition of COVID-19 than used by the World Health Organization and other countries.
- A decision to abandon testing of most people who didn't require hospitalization, and failure, early on, to create any way to track infection.
- A decision to abandon a programme of widespread "contact tracing," in which people in contact with an infected person were traced and told to isolate to stop the outbreak spreading.
- Deciding to share almost no details about the location of infections with local public health officials or the pub-



Britain's Health Secretary Matt Hancock oversees bodies including the NHS and Public Health England. Hancock is pictured donating COVID-19 antibodies in June, having previously recovered from the illness. REUTERS

lic.

- Fragmenting local responsibility for public health.

"Every mistake that was made did, unfortunately, cost lives," said Professor Tim Spector, an epidemiologist at King's College London.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson has said his government followed scientific advice at all times. Ministers point out that from mid-April, the UK dramatically increased the number of tests carried out and recruited thousands of contact tracers to control outbreaks.

In a statement, Public Health England chief executive Selbie told Reuters his agency's work had helped to save lives. "Beating this virus was always going to be a marathon not a sprint," Selbie said. "It remains our sole focus and we have done our absolute best with all our available resources."

Still, as the country began emerging from its lockdown this month, there was another blow to the government. It was forced to delay until at least autumn a contact-tracing app that it had hoped would be a game changer in tracking the virus and averting a second wave of infection. It emerged the app didn't work properly with iPhones.

## Into the fog

Once it surfaced, the virus spread rapidly in Britain. Infections peaked weeks earlier than the authorities expected not just in England, but in all parts of the UK.

England's Chief Medical Officer Chris Whitty, the government's top health adviser, recently conceded, "Many of the problems we had come because we were unable to actually work out exactly where we were, and we were trying to see our way through the fog."

Several senior doctors, who led the response to COVID-19 at major hospitals, told Reuters the fog was partly a result of early decisions by Whitty and other advisers that restricted testing for the virus. The doctors asked not to be named because they were not authorised by the NHS to speak publicly.

Public Health England had two main ways of monitoring and controlling the virus: a programme of testing and one of contact tracing to track down the contacts of anyone with the infection. These methods depended on what doctors call a "case definition," the description of what a COVID-19 case looks like, to determine who should be tested.

In early February, the World Health Organization listed eight symptoms for COVID-19, including nausea and vomiting. In Germany, the government's disease-control agency, the Robert Koch Institute, said doctors should use their judgment in ordering tests and it encouraged tests even for those with "unspecified general symptoms," meaning mild symptoms.

Britain took a different course. Whitty and his colleagues adopted a narrower view, defining COVID-19 symptoms as only a sharp new cough, fever or shortness of breath. Britain clung to this definition through the peak of the outbreak. It was not updated until May 18 - after 34,796 deaths - when a loss of taste and smell was added to the symptom list.

Spector, the King's College professor, said Britain's refusal to recognize more symptoms created space for the virus to spread. Because testing was restricted to people exhibiting the UK's narrow range of symptoms, many cases likely went unnoticed and the virus spread unchecked.

"The country that invented epidemiology was the only one that had no surveillance programme and no idea what was going on in their own country," he told Reuters.

Several senior doctors said they had pleaded with the authorities to expand the case defini-

tion. But they got nowhere.

One London consultant said a Public Health England laboratory refused to accept test samples from patients who didn't meet the UK definition. Asked if this was true, a Public Health England spokesman said: "That is right, but there is nothing unusual in this. Lab testing capacity was used to establish whether people that met the case definition had the virus."

Britain also restricted testing in other ways. At first it would test only those who had come into contact with confirmed cases and those with symptoms who had travelled from Wuhan, China, the origin of the outbreak, then from February 1 the rest of China, and six days later from other parts of Asia. Parts of Italy, the first European country to be badly hit by the virus, and Iran were added on February 25. Others were excluded.

"We were testing all these people with a cough from China and parts of Asia," said one senior doctor at a London teaching hospital, but meanwhile cases from other countries passed unnoticed.

Community testing in London, using the narrow guidelines, found only roughly 50 positive cases among some 5,000 tested by mid-March, another infectious disease specialist doctor in the capital said. Reuters has estimated that more than 18,000 Londoners were or had been infected with the virus by the end of February.

"A lot of us felt it was looking for a needle in a haystack," this doctor said.

A large genetic study would later show that most UK infections had come from Europe, not Asia. Beginning in early February, the virus strain could be traced back to Italy, then Spain and France, a team from the University of Oxford and University of Edinburgh found.

Many frontline doctors believe the disease was carried home to Britain from Europe's ski resorts. The biggest influx was when families returned from their half-term break, shortly after Selbie's February 21 blog post that celebrated recording no further cases.

Public Health England told Reuters it didn't set policy. The Department of Health and Social Care, Britain's health ministry, said the case definition was set by the government's top medical advisers, based on scientific advice. The definition was continually reviewed, the ministry said. "The symptoms selected were those that captured those most likely to have COVID-19, while not capturing a great number of people who did not," the department said in a response to Reuters.

In Scotland, which followed the same UK-wide case definition, there were also far more early cases than realised. In the Glasgow region, for instance, Reuters calculated there were at least 200 cases by the end of February. But, according to official data, there were no cases.

## Who's in charge?

The government would later concede the UK hadn't tested enough. Matt Hancock, the health minister, blamed a shortage of lab capacity. "We have the best scientific labs in the world, but we did not have the scale," he said in April. Germany, in contrast, "could call upon a hundred test labs, ready and waiting when the crisis struck." He did not specify how many labs the UK had.

But according to Mark Reed, general manager of Pro-Lab Diagnostics, a Canadian-owned company, that wasn't the case. "Every maker of diagnostics was saying 'We are here.' I don't think the government engaged enough; they underestimated what was required."

Reed and officials from two other diagnostic firms - Novacyt and GeneFirst Ltd - told Reuters that Public Health England evaluations of their testing kits were not completed until mid-to-late March. As a result, NHS labs were reluctant to

are controlling all of the testing."

At the beginning, "the only game in town was the PHE test," agreed Allan Wilson, president of the Institute of Biomedical Science, which represents NHS laboratory staff.

## The system wasn't designed for fast results.

Ravi Gupta, a Cambridge University professor of clinical microbiology, said patients at Cambridge's Addenbrooke's Hospital had likely infected others with the coronavirus while kept on wards waiting for test results. In the early weeks, he said, they had to wait two to four days. Gupta helped develop a 90-minute test.

Members of parliament's science committee criticised Public Health England in May for initially restricting testing to a small number of labs, calling it "one of the most consequential" decisions of the crisis. Selbie responded by stating the responsibility for testing policy lay with the government's health ministry, the Department of Health. "PHE operates reference laboratories for novel and dangerous pathogens and would not be expected to operate mass testing programmes," he said.

## Silent outbreak in Birmingham, the virus arrived unnoticed.

Zia Choudhry remembers his father, Mohamed Aslam Wassan, a 67-year-old retired businessman "full of love and full of energy" coming home with a cough on March 15. Choudhry lived with his dad and his mother, together with his wife and children, in a house in Lozells, a district of Birmingham.

In the next few weeks, Wassan, remembered by some for bringing a famous snack, Bombay Mix, to the city, would die of COVID-19. So would four of his close friends, all well-known faces in the local Pakistani community. They were among at least 1,000 who would die across the city.

Until his father had taken ill, Choudhry recalled, there had been little sign that the epidemic had arrived. Up to that time, no death from COVID-19 had been recorded in this city of just over one million people. The city council had just issued a press release confirming a total of five local cases, and reminding citizens "the risk to the general public remains low."

But the infection had already been seeded. By Reuters calculations, based on later deaths, about 29,000 people were infected in Birmingham by that point.

There were grim days that followed. Eight days after his infection, Wassan was hospitalized. He was put on a ventilator the next day, and it was turned off after five more days. Choudhry could not attend his father's funeral.

Choudhry believes the advice to socially isolate by staying at home, which did not come until March 23, should have come earlier. His father had been healthy enough to live much longer, he thinks. "You know, it was not his time," he said.

Speaking at a press conference in early June, Prime Minister Boris Johnson said it was still too early to draw conclusions about early decisions. "All such judgments will need to be examined in

the fullness of time," he said.

Lozells, where many people are of Pakistani or Bangladeshi origin, was particularly hard hit - with at least 25 people dying. Yet, for many weeks into the outbreak, local health officials were kept in the dark by central government and Public Health England.

In interviews, seven directors of public health at large local authorities told Reuters they received little more information than the government released to the public on its website. The directors, who are employed by local authorities, not by Public Health England, said this lack of communication hampered their efforts to prevent the virus spreading.

"We were flying blind," said Lisa McNally, director of public health in Sandwell, a district neighbouring Birmingham.

McNally said the government refused to share models used by its scientific advisers and the data that fed them. They wouldn't reveal, for example, how many people from her area were calling the NHS helpline with COVID-19 symptoms. If local officials had been kept informed there could have been special efforts to work out the source of infection, or an information campaign aimed at a particular area to reinforce the lockdown. "We basically would have done contact tracing," she said.

Louise Smith, the director of health in the rural county of Norfolk, in eastern England, was angry that mortality and case data weren't shared by local hospitals. From March to mid-April, she said, "I was finding out about the deaths by reading the local newspaper."

In Birmingham, the city's health director Justin Varney said when the first deaths occurred in early March, he used to get a personal call from Chris Whitty or his deputy. But he was given neither a name nor post-code of the victim. It was just the "barest minimum of details" and he was told "not do anything with that until the NHS announced it."

## Whitty did not respond to a request for comment.

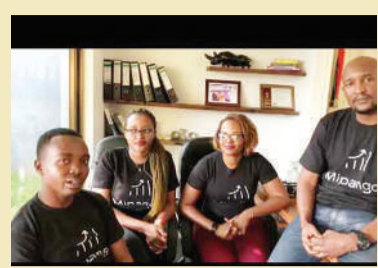
And the information blackout continued. Throughout most of the outbreak, Birmingham's Varney, like other public health directors, was given no more detail about deaths and infections than was published on national websites, with the exception of information about outbreaks in nursing homes or other institutions. A breakdown of deaths by neighbourhood, which would have identified clusters like in Lozells, was not released until May 1.

Secrecy was pervasive. Dr Helen Carter, Public Health England's deputy director in the Midlands, revealed in a May 15 memo to Birmingham councillors that the government had initially ordered the agency not to share with local councils its surveillance reports containing data about notified cases from local hospital emergency rooms and general practitioners.

"Until April 2020 PHE was not permitted to share the surveillance reports with local partners by the Cabinet Office," she wrote in the memo, which is reported here for the first time. After April, information was shared with public health directors, but the reports remained official secrets and were "marked as official sensitive and not in the public domain," said the memo, which was reviewed by Reuters.

Public Health England declined requests by Reuters to interview Carter or any member of its staff involved in contact tracing. A spokesman said some of its surveillance reports were classified as "official sensitive" which, the spokesman said, was standard practice for non-public information. The agency had a "constant dialogue" with local health directors, with "routine exchanges of information and data," the spokesman added.

The government also restricted the power of local authorities to inform their communities about the spread of the virus. Health director Varney, who works for the city of Birmingham, said in the beginning there had been "a complete embargo on local government doing proactive (communications) about COVID. At this stage, everything was being centrally controlled."



## CURRENT NEWS

Mipango fintech debuts personal finance App for Africa's market

Page 14



## BUSINESS NEWS

NMB's education, health sector donations reach Mbeya, Songwe regions

Page 14



## OUTLOOK & ANALYSIS

Horticulture industry gets partners to develop skills for US\$1.85bn revenue by 2025

Page 15



Tracey Davies, director of JustShare.

## Climate activists turn up heat on Standard Bank during AGM

JOHANNESBURG

Standard Bank came under fire from activists over climate issues at its annual general meeting on Friday, though shareholders did not heed their calls to vote out directors over links to fossil fuels.

Climate advocates have increased the pressure on Africa's largest bank by assets in recent weeks after it declined to table two climate-related resolutions from activist shareholder, JustShare, at the AGM.

Activists from JustShare and other groups flooded the virtual meeting with questions and concerns about Standard Bank directors with ties to fossil fuels, its climate-related disclosures and its involvement in projects including a Ugandan crude oil pipeline and gas developments in Mozambique.

"Please can you explain how the development of massive new oil and gas projects in Africa, many of which Standard Bank is involved in funding, are in line with the goals of the Paris Agreement?" Tracey Davies, director of JustShare, wrote, referring to the 2015 pact signed by almost 200 countries.

In response, David Hodnett, group chief risk and ethics officer, said that agreement recognised that the transition to a greener economy will take longer in Africa especially where access to affordable energy constrains development.

South African lenders have not kept pace with international peers on issues including the end of funding for coal-fired power projects, leaving some concerned they were not being proactive enough on climate change.

Standard Bank CEO Sim Tshabalala said it was firmly and irrevocably committed to tackling the climate emergency, and that work was underway on some of the issues at the centre of the resolutions proposed by JustShare.

The bank told Reuters after the meeting it aimed to make its first climate-related financial disclosures in the next three or four months, and outline a policy on lending to oil and gas projects by the end of the year.

JustShare also recently sent letters to shareholders calling on them to vote against the re-election of five non-executive directors because of their links to fossil fuels, such as holding board positions at energy companies. Shareholders voted in favour of the re-election of all five directors on Friday.

# Fish contribution to economy hits 1.85trn/- in 2019/20 fiscal year

By Francis Kajubi

The contribution of the fisheries industry to the country's gross domestic product rose from 1.63trn/- in 2018/19 season to 1.85trn/- last fiscal year thanks to a raft of measures taken by the government to safeguard the industry.

According to fresh data from Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries, during 2019/20, a total of 202,053 fishermen aboard 58,930 vessels caught 392,933 metric tons of fish worth 1.85trillion/-.

Last year, the fisheries sector thus contributed 1.71 percent of GDP compared to 1.5 percent in the previous year. It is estimated that over 4.5 million people depend on fishing related activities in the country.

The report said fishing activities are dominated by small-scale fishermen who account for more than 95 percent of the total fish produced in the country while commercial fishing contributes a paltry five percent.

"Fish contributes approximately 30 percent of animal-derived protein and its intake per person per year has increased from 8.2kg in 1999/2000 to 8.5kg in 2015/20," a Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) report dated 2018 said adding that fish uptake average per person is 20.3kg a year.

"According to research reports, the



Livestock and Fisheries Minister, Luhaga Mpina presenting his budget in parliament last month.

quantity of fish in the country's water bodies increased from 2,803,000 tons in 2018/19 to 3,274,165 tons in

2019/20 being an increase of about 16.8 percent," said Minister of Livestock and Fisheries, Luhaga Mpina in his 2020/21

budget speech.

Mpinda said despite of the gains achieved, the industry continues to

face many challenges such as not having enough fishing boats especially to catch the delicacy in the country's exclusive economic zone in the Indian Ocean.

"To address the challenges, the government has implemented a number of initiatives such as reviving Tanzania Fishing Company (TAFICO) in 2018," he stated adding that his ministry has also embarked on a plan to increase the number of fisheries extension officers through training of manpower.

He further pointed out that in the 2019/20 season, the ministry was targeting to collect 32.30bn/- revenue and that by April this year, the ministry had collected 24.48bn/-, an equivalent of 75.80 percent of the target.

The revenue is a combination of money collected from export and import licenses, import and export royalty which contributed 84 percent of all revenues. The ministry in the 2020/21 fiscal year projects to collect 33bn/- of revenue, Mpinda told lawmakers last month.

## Kilwa sardine traders on the receiving end of Covid-19 proceeds

By Beatrice Philemon

THOUSANDS of sardines women traders at Kilwa Kivinje fish landing site in Lindi region have suffered huge losses as the novel coronavirus disrupted markets denying them income from consumers.

Chairperson of the sardine women traders' group, Halima Madadi said during a dialogue on the impact of Covid-19 on women's businesses in Kilwa held last week that

The dialogues which organized by Kilwa Women's Platform with the support from ActionAid Tanzania, further heard that the number of traders from Democratic Republic of Congo who frequent the market

dropped dramatically from 20 to one per month while prices fell to between 20,000/- and 27,000/- per 20 litre from between 35,000/- and 37,000/-.

"Most women have lost their capital due to coronavirus outbreak as DRC traders stopped coming to Kilwa to purchase sardines," Madadi said noting that the majority of the women are currently struggling to survive as their husbands have also abandoned their families.

According to her, the majority of women traders selling sardines at Kilwa Kivinje are struggling to repay debts as they took loans of between 20m/- and 30m/-.

"Before COVID-19, life was very good, the business was



Sardines at a market.

also good but the virus has wiped out all our savings and everything has since changed dramatically for the worst," she noted.

Other women businesses such as 'Mama mtiles' have also suffered because of reduced customer numbers as the Congolese bring with them big numbers of others.

Commenting on the subject, Secretary of Tumaini Jipya la Wanawake Kilwa Women Platform, Pili Kuliwa said because the virus has affected their businesses, they are requesting the government to invest and improve their market which is an important vehicle for the fish products value chain.

"We also call on Kilwa District Council to come up with a new and effective tax collection system for fish and fish products so that 20 percent of generated revenue should be returned to Kilwa Kivinje for artisanal fishers," she added while the remained funds go to improve infrastructure of the district.

## Gold nears \$1,800 as demand for safe haven assets surges

NEW YORK

Gold futures edged closer towards \$1,800 an ounce - a level last seen at the end of 2011 - as demand for haven assets surged amid concerns over rising coronavirus infections.

Bullion rose as deaths surpassed 500,000 worldwide and confirmed cases exceeded 10 million, according to Johns Hopkins University data. The increasing numbers are a chilling reminder that the deadliest pandemic of the modern era is stronger than ever.

The precious metal has rallied 17 per cent this year as governments and central banks implemented stimulus measures to aid economies battered by the pandemic. Investors are increasingly turning to gold as a store of wealth, and banks including Goldman Sachs Group now forecast it will hit a record \$2,000 an ounce in 12 months.

## Microsoft to close physical stores and focus on online sales

WASHINGTON

Microsoft will permanently close all of its 83 retail stores globally and completely switch to online sales channels, the company said.

The closure of the physical stores will result in a pre-tax charge of nearly \$450 million or \$0.05 per share, in the current quarter ending on June 30, the company said. This includes asset write-offs and impairments.

"The past months have been extraordinary ... amidst the challenges, our team has focused on how we can continue to serve our customers," said David Porter, corporate vice president of Microsoft Store. "Our team has proven success serving customers beyond any physical location."

Besides product sales, Microsoft's stores offered users a place to try out Windows-run

PCs, Xbox consoles and various third-party computers and phones. The company said it would keep physical locations in New York, Sydney, London and at its Redmond campus in Washington, which it will convert into experience centres. They will showcase new technologies but will not sell anything.

The company's physical stores had been temporarily closed on March 17 because of the coronavirus outbreak. Since then, the company said its retail team had hosted more than 14,000 online workshops and summer camps, training hundreds of thousands of enterprise and education customers on using remote work and learning software.

Microsoft first announced its plans to open physical stores in February 2009 - a move that was considered a challenge to Apple's retail

stores. It has 72 stores in the US, seven in Canada and one each in the UK, Australia, Puerto Rico and Finland.

Microsoft-owned Windows is one of the most widely-used operating systems in the world. The tech company said it had seen strong growth of traffic to Microsoft.com and its digital Xbox and Windows storefronts, reaching up to 1.2 billion monthly customers in 190 markets in the past few months.

The company is also offering virtual product demos, customer support, online tutorials and workshops to support online sales. "We will continue to invest in digital solutions, including new services such as one-to-one video sales support," Mr Porter said. The company has not announced any layoffs as a result of the store closures.

"We deliberately built teams with unique backgrounds that could serve customers from anywhere ... [it] ensured we could continue to serve customers of all sizes when they needed us most, working remotely these last months."

"Our commitment to growing and developing careers from this talent pool is stronger than ever." Closing physical stores is a "tough, but smart strategic decision" by Microsoft, Wedbush Securities analyst Daniel Ives wrote in a note to clients.

"The physical stores generated negligible retail revenue ... and ultimately everything was moving more and more towards the digital channels over the last few years." Earlier this month, Microsoft opened an artificial intelligence centre for energy in Dubai to experiment with technologies that could be used globally.

# NMB's education, health sector donations benefit Mbeya, Songwe regions



NMB's Manager for the Southern Highlands Zone, Straton Chilongola (R), presents desks at a past event.

By Smart Money Reporter

**M**BEYA and Songwe regions joined the list of beneficiaries of NMB Bank Plc's materials with desks going to Momba district public schools and corrugated iron sheets for Vwawa district designated hospital all valued at 10m/-.

Speaking after presenting the donations, NMB's Zone Manager for Southern Highlands, Straton Chilongola said the bank's responded to a request from the two districts. Chilongola who presented the donation at Nzoka Primary

School in Momba said the bank donated 53 desks and 174 pieces of iron sheets valued at 10m/-.

"This donation is meant to back state efforts to improve delivery of education and health services," he said.

Momba District Commissioner, Juma Irando commended NMB's leadership for continued support of state investments in education and health plus disaster relief. "NMB has been a very good development partner for us in Momba for many years in addition to giving us better banking services," said Irando. He said the desks and

iron sheets will help boost pupils morale to work hard and excel in education.

Meanwhile at Vwawa designated district hospital, the bank also handed over 174 iron sheets worth 5m/- to assist with expansion of the hospital's labour wards and visitors' pavilion so that people who go to see their hospitalised patients can relax.

The hospital's Director, Dr Lukombodzo Lulandala paid tribute to NMB for the support because for a long time there was shortage of labour wards and a visitors waiting pavilion to avoid congestion.

"After this facility was declared as a designated referral hospital, we have witnessed a surge in number of patients compared to when it was Mbozi district hospital," Dr Lulandala said.

Speaking after handing over the materials, Chilongola said the bank will continue supporting state efforts to improve delivery of services but also provide relief aid when disasters strike. The bank donated 100 desks to Chunya Urban and Kibaoni Primary Schools and 172 iron sheets to back renovation of Makongorosi health centre in Mbeya region.



Mipango's founding directors.

# Mipango fintech debuts personal finance App for Africa's market

By Smart Money Reporter

A new application that will provide free personal financial management to local customers has been launched by Mipango Fintech in Dar es Salaam this week.

Mipango Fintech which is an artificial intelligence company believes that the finance enabled application will support customers to better manage their expenses, provide an opportunity to set up budgets, analyze expenses and track personal finances.

The application which aims at empowering the local market, operates in Kiswahili language while giving financial education in a language that locals understand for bigger impact. Mipango's Co-founder, Lilian Makoi said financial

literacy is a key gap in the growth and development of the local market hence decision to launch the new product.

"Over 50 percent of Tanzanian adults do not keep track of their expenditures and have no financial goals. This factor leads many citizens to engage in bad debt practices which in turn leads many people into abject poverty," Makoi said.

She noted that the new application is an opportunity to change the way people run their daily lives by improving their relationship with money. Makoi said the application will help consumer receive free financial advice, track their various income, expenses on the go, manage their loans and debts.

"Upon consumer uptake of the application, we expect to have more than one million downloads within the first twelve months. A 2017 research by Financial Sector Deepening Trust cites that there are over 27 million active users of mobile phones in Tanzania that make 66 percent of the population of which 48.7 percent of them have access to smartphones," the Mipango Fintech Co-founder added.

Backing her peer, Mipango Co-founder, Agness Mollel said the startup envisions a future where teenagers and young adults understand how to better plan their finances so as to tap on relevant investment opportunities in this country. "Our aim is to empower people from across

different income brackets and ages to be able to be in control of their finances and ultimately, their future," Mollel noted.

The company's Chief Technology Officer, Nicholas Ngolongolo said in order to serve the market better, Mipango will be introducing new products every month, including budget tracker and net-worth calculator that supports financial planning.

"This launch has three features, create your financial profile, set up your monthly budgets and record your daily to monthly expenses which will be tracked against your budgets. With such data, you should be more in control of your finances than ever," said Ngolongolo.

# UK Export Finance set to help out Total's \$20 billion Mozambique LNG

LONDON

Britain's export credit agency UK Export Finance (UKEF) is set to back a \$20 billion (£16 billion) liquefied natural gas (LNG) project in Mozambique, a source with direct knowledge of the matter told Reuters on Friday.

UKEF listed the project, led by French energy major Total as under consideration for financing last August. A decision to contribute will draw criticism from campaigners who have opposed such a move.

The source said UKEF was planning to commit funding probably to the tune of around \$800 million to the project, which is among several being developed in Mozambique's north after one of the biggest gas finds in a decade off its coast. "UKEF cannot comment on speculation on potential transactions for reasons of commercial confidentiality," a spokeswoman said.

The projects have the potential to make Mozambique, one of the world's least developed countries, a major LNG player. Total and other big oil companies are touting LNG as a transition fuel as it produces fewer emissions than crude

oil.

Campaigners however say such projects lock in harmful emissions for the foreseeable future and hurt often impoverished local communities, especially in countries with a history of corruption, like Mozambique.

They say they are out of step with commitments under the 2015 Paris Agreement, signed by almost 200 countries. As a signatory that is trying to position itself as a leader on climate issues, activists say Britain will be sending the wrong message by funding the project.

"By backing this massive fossil fuel project, the UK would undermine their credibility as they prepare to host the UN climate negotiations next year," said Alex Doukas, program director at campaign group Oil Change International.

"The UK should never finance another fossil fuel project if they are serious about being a climate leader." Total has secured \$15 billion in financing for the project, with the financing agreement expected to be signed next week. It aims to start producing gas in 2024.

# Zambia sees 126% growth of mobile money payments

LUSAKA

Mobile money payments in Zambia have grown to an annual average of 126% in value, from K2.07 billion in 2015 to K49.45 billion in 2019. This is according to the country's Central Bank which confirms significant growth in digital financial services.

Speaking at the launch of the Zambia digital economic diagnostic report, Central Bank governor Dr. Denny Kalyalya said as at the end of last year, the number of active mobile money wallets had increased to about 14 million and about 4.9 million were actively transacting, representing a 34% of the total registered mobile money wallets.

Kalyalya added that the digital financial services landscape in Zambia has drastically changed, as the usage of digital channels for the delivery of payments and financial services has grown considerably. He said the majority of commercial banks have developed and deployed mobile money applications that their customers use to access financial services, and e-money

issuers are capitalising on smart and feature phones to offer these services.

He said the performance of these other electronic payment streams such as electronic fund transfers have equally recorded remarkable growth, with annual average growth of 35% in value from K21.83 billion processed in 2015 to K67.81 billion processed in 2019.

"From these statistics, it can clearly be demonstrated that there is great potential in Zambia to have more people financially included through digital channels and ultimately in the digital economy. I therefore urge all stakeholders to focus on harnessing the potential of financial inclusion through scaling up the uptake of ICTs," said Kalyalya.

World Bank country manager for Zambia Sahr Kpundeh said the country's digital economic diagnosis report was prepared before COVID-19 outbreak but it is even more relevant now because under the current circumstances, digitalisation has offered an opportunity for contactless business continuity.

# COVID-19 hits Malawi's remittance market hard

LILONGWE

Malawi has recorded a 33% drop in remittances from Malawians working or living abroad. This is according to the Reserve Bank of Malawi (RBM) which stated that in the last five months, remittances have dropped to US\$78.96-million from US\$118.03-million received during the same period last year.

RBM spokesperson Mbane Ngwira said the drop is largely due to the economic crisis triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdowns in some countries which has resulted in a reduction in wages and employment of migrant workers.

As in many other African countries, including Zambia, the fall in remittances in Malawi represents a loss of crucial financing lifeline for many vulnerable households. Ngwira added: "We have a significant drop in the amount of funds the country receives through remittances. This practically means that we may not reach our target for 2020 of US\$300 million."

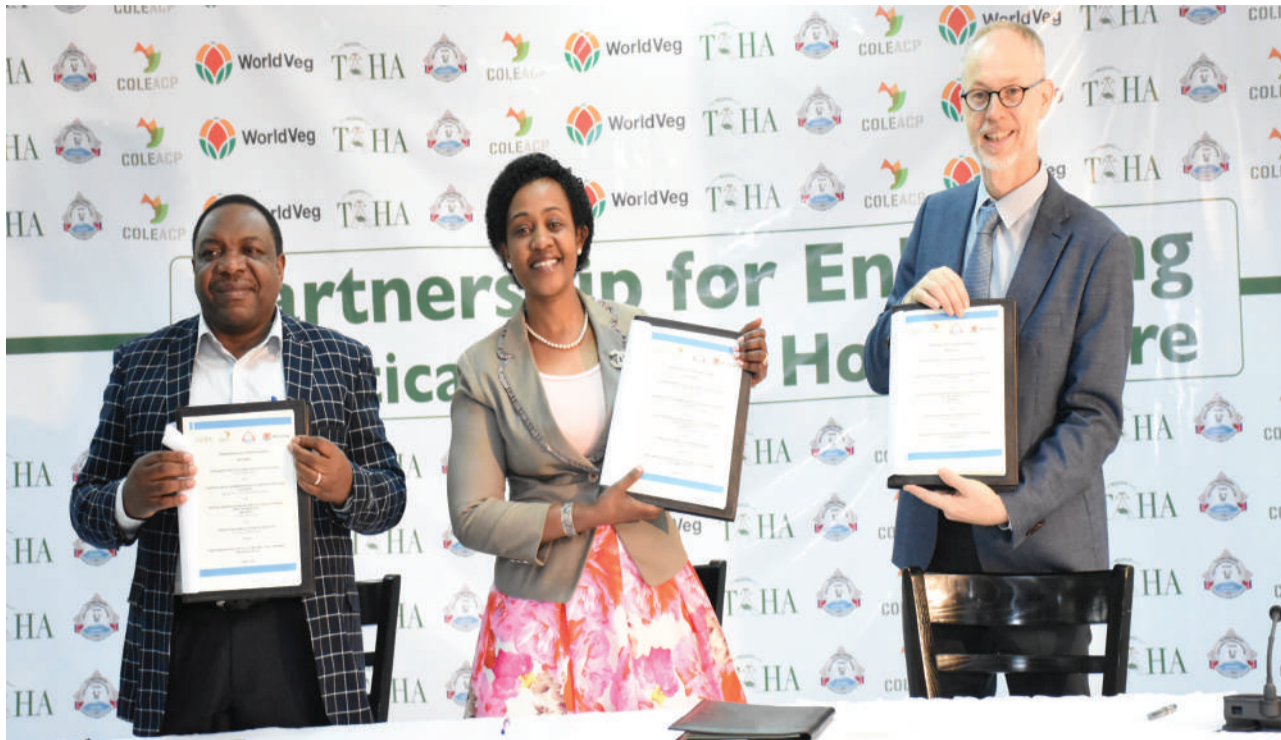
In April this year, the World Bank warned that remittances to Sub-Saharan Africa is expected to decline

by 23.1% from US\$48-billion in 2019 to US\$37-billion in 2020, due to the COVID-19 crisis. The Bank warned that due to the pandemic, countries would face the challenge of high cost of sending remittances.

According to the World Bank's Remittance Prices Worldwide database, the global average cost of sending US\$200 stands at around 7%, but that Sub-Saharan African countries continue to have the highest average cost at 9%.

In a statement released in June 2020, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) said within the Eastern and Southern Africa region, leading recipients of remittances are Egypt, Kenya, Tunisia, DRC and Zimbabwe.

COMESA director of Trade and Customs Dr. Christopher Onyango said, "Migrants in the Diaspora have lost jobs and taken pay cuts amidst the coronavirus outbreak and subsequent lockdowns leading to drastic fall in remittances. Thus, many countries have suffered a double blow more so those that remittances constitutes a significant share of the GDP."



Taha Group CEO Dr Jacqueline Mkindi (C) displays a signed memorandum of understanding alongside with NM-AIST vice chancellor Professor Emmanuel Luoga (L) and WVC's officer-in-charge, Dr Ralph Roothaert (R), in Arusha after a signing ceremony in Arusha last week. Photo courtesy of Taha.

## Horticulture industry lands partners to develop skills for U\$1.85bn revenue by 2025

By Smart Money Reporter

IN a bid to unleash the country's full horticulture potential and boost annual revenue from the current US\$779 million to US\$1.85 billion in the next five years, Tanzania Horticultural Association in collaboration with key global partners has rolled out, an ambitious 'Marshall Plan' to build capacity through training of experts.

The US dollar earning industry which relies on global markets, is currently facing acute shortage of skilled personnel hence relies on hiring foreign experts to support rapid growth through production of quality produce.

To achieve the ambitious revenue target by 2025, Taha has signed a strategic partnership agreement with Europe-Africa-Caribbean-Pacific Liaison Committee (COLEACP), World Vegetable Center (WVC) and Nelson Mandela African Institution of Science and Technology (NM-AIST), institutions which have vast experience on skills development and pioneers in horticultural practical training.

Whereas COLEACP is an international network promoting sustainable horticultural trade between ACP-countries and the European Union, the WVC is a competent institute for vegetable research and development.

"The MoU signing between Taha, COLEACP, WVC and NM-AIST marks a turning point in bridging practical skills gap facing Tanzania's horticulture value chains. The five year pilot programme will see thousands of youths being imparted with skills to unlock the industry's full potential," said Taha Group CEO, Dr Jacqueline Mkindi.

Dr Mkindi said the deal paves way for the rolling out of the accredited horticultural practical training

programme, offering local and international recognized certificate and diploma courses at the prestigious NM-AIST based in Arusha. The MoU also states that Taha will coordinate private and public sectors to support the project, promote and market the programme to the entire industry as well as oversee practical session.

NM-AIST is entrusted to offer specialised practical training, conduct crops research from farm to laboratory and come up with hybrid seeds to add value and boost horticulture produce yields. The WVC and COLEACP will bring their vast experience on research and development, post harvest management and technology needed to turn around the horticulture.

"The horticulture value chain is currently experiencing a seismic shift in terms of production, technology and the necessary skills required. And the competent labour force - or lack thereof - has become the single biggest hand-break to industry growth," Mkindi explained.

The Taha's chief's argument is echoed by a recent study conducted in East African region by the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) and the East African Business Council (EABC) to establish employers' perceptions of graduates which indicated that more than 50 percent of university graduates are half-baked as they lack basic practical skills.

This means university students are graduating without attaining basic and practical skills required in the job market, denying the EA region's economies the quality human capital that they need to grow and compete globally.

Uganda is the worst among the peers, with only 37 percent of its graduates fit for the job market, whereas Tanzania has only 39 percent of its degree holders rated as competent. Comparatively, 45 percent and 48 percent of the graduates in Burundi and Rwanda, respectively, are competent for the job market while Kenya has the best-rated graduates, with 49 percent.

NM-AIST Vice-Chancellor, Professor Emmanuel Luoga vowed to deliver the competent graduates not only fit for the labour market, but also job creators. "Through the programme, we intend to produce highly skilled personnel in horticulture value addition to be able to make perfumes and export instead of raw flowers," Prof Luoga hinted.

COLEACP Director for Operations, Jeremy Knops backed Prof Luoga's observation by stating that his organization is committed on the initiative which will also enable technology transfer. Knops was also supported by Officer-in-Charge for World Vegetable Regional Center for Eastern and Southern Africa, Dr Ralph Roothaert who said he appreciated to get an opportunity to work with Taha and NM-AIST to transform the country's horticulture industry.

Way back in 2006, when Taha was established, there were less than 50 commercial horticultural companies in the country which exported insignificant volumes of commodities to European markets. In the past 14 years, Taha has championed extraordinary growth of the industry with millions of both large-scale and smallholder farmers earning the country billions of shillings in revenue annually

## Sony sees software subscriptions as the future for its image sensors

TOKYO

Sony's image sensor business aims to replicate PlayStation's success to address its reliance on a handful of manufacturers in the fickle smartphone market by selling software by subscription for data-analysing sensors in situ.

Transforming the light-converting chips into a platform for software – essentially akin to the PlayStation Plus videogame service – amounts to a sea change for the US\$10-billion business, which built its dominance through hardware breakthroughs.

The effort chimes with Sony's pursuit of recurring revenue after years of loss in the volatile consumer electronics sector. Success, analysts said, could serve as a rejoinder to activist investor Daniel Loeb's calls for the business to be spun off. "We have a solid position in the market for image sensors, which serve as a gateway for imaging data," said Sony's Hideki Somemiya, who heads a new team developing sensor applications.

Analysis of such data with artificial intelligence "would form a market larger than the growth potential of the sensor market itself in terms of value", Somemiya said in an interview, pointing to the recurring nature of software-dependent data processing versus a hardware-only business.

Sony has developed what it

calls the world's first image sensor with integrated AI processor. The sensor can be installed in security cameras where it can single out factory workers not wearing helmets, for instance, or be mounted in vehicles to monitor driver drowsiness. Importantly, the software can be modified or replaced wirelessly without disturbing the camera.

Monthly fees

The Japanese conglomerate hopes customers will subscribe to its sensor software service through monthly fees or licensing, much like how gamers buy a PlayStation console and then pay for software or subscribe to online services. Sony has not disclosed a start date for the service, but at a news conference last month, Somemiya said there was demand from "retailers, factories – mainly business-to-business".

South Korea's Samsung Electronics and Chinese-owned OmniVision Technologies are also expanding the software capability of image sensors, but analysts said a 52% market share gives Sony a competitive edge in the emerging area.

Still, said Somemiya, a software-centred approach will require a change of mindset at a division accustomed to abiding by specifications of smartphone makers – just five of whom account for the bulk of its revenue.

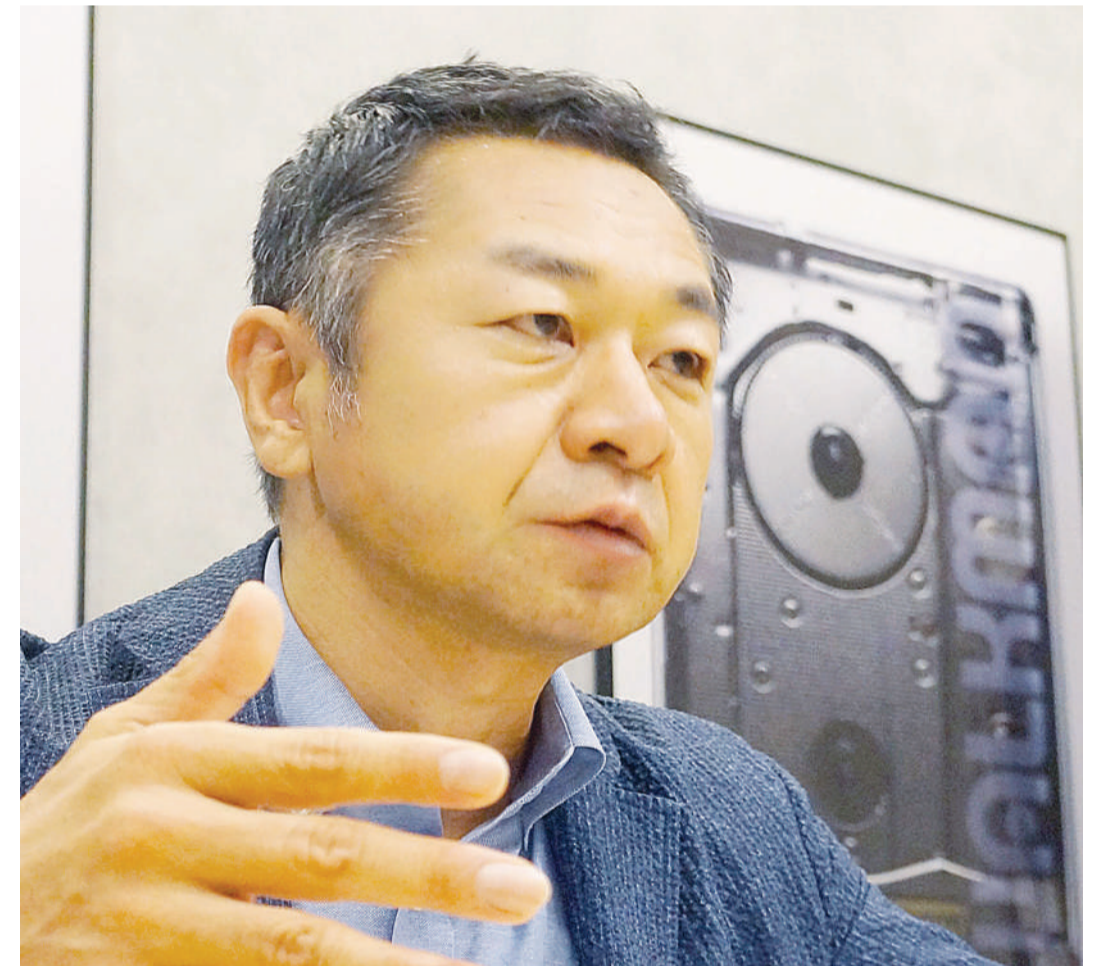
The new direction comes as US hedge fund Third Point, a

minority investor headed by Loeb, continues to push Sony to spin off the image sensor division, saying its value could be higher if it was not masked by the complexity of the company. Sony CEO Kenichiro Yoshida counters that keeping the division in house gives it easier access to group resources and has said diversity is the company's strength.

"CEO Yoshida's message suggests Sony will focus on profit growth with diversified businesses," said analyst Junya Ayada at JPMorgan Securities. Sony's portfolio may be growing in complexity, but it still reported two consecutive years of record profit through to March 2019, Ayada said. Having technology with diversified applications can also be advantageous in times of uncertainty, said Atsushi Osanai, professor at Waseda University Business School.

"The next big thing for sensors may be in self-driving technology, but it's important to explore other applications," Osanai said. Still, others said it is hard to factor in the potential of the sensor software subscription service as it could take years for such a business to become a driver of Sony's overall growth. "The number of sensors used at factories and retailers will probably be small compared to those for the over one-billion-unit smartphone market," said analyst Hideki Yasuda at Ace Securities.

VIEW FROM THE TOP



Sony sensor business executive, Hideki Somemiya.

## MPs reject Treasury's Sh1.5bn bid for Covid-19 testing kits

NAIROBI

Kenya is staring at a possible public health crisis after MPs rejected the National Treasury's proposal to allocate Sh1.5 billion for purchase of Covid-19 testing kits and chemical reagents, holding back tests for coronavirus.

Lawmakers last week rejected allocations of the money to the Kenya Medical Supplies Authority (Kemsas), arguing that the State agency was under investigations by the anti-graft agency for buying substandard reagents and personal protective equipment (PPE) for health workers. The rejection comes as Kenya struggles with unprocessed tests due to effects of shortages caused by a worldwide race to acquire testing kits and slow allocation of money to tackle the pandemic.

Lawmakers expressed anger at the Treasury's bid to divert part of the Sh3 billion allocation set aside for three national referral hospitals and select county referral hospitals for Covid-19 to Kemsas in breach of Parliament's directive to ring-fence the funding for the facilities. The House rejected the Treasury's decision to divert Sh1.5 billion out of the Sh3 billion that MPs had ring-fenced in April to fight the pandemic.

The Budget and Appropriations Committee (BAC) also shot down the Treasury's attempt to move Sh700 million from the funds dedicated to the hospitals to the Kenya Medical Training College (KMTC), which is currently being used as an isolation centre for Covid-19 patients.

MPs further rejected the Treasury's attempt to move Sh300 million from the allocation to hospitals for the purchase and supply of face masks to vulnerable groups. "That this House reject the reallocation of ring-fenced funds including those affecting the Ministry of Health," Moses Lessonet, the vice chairperson of BAC said while initiating debate on the Treasury's third supplementary budget for the financial year ending tomorrow (Tuesday).

The MPs backed the committee's resolutions as Kenya scrambles for more resources to ramp up diagnostic testing to better understand where the coronavirus is spreading and how to stop outbreaks. This is critical as the country prepares in coming days to ease restrictions imposed to curb Covid-19 such as the night curfew and the halting of movements in three countries hit most by the virus, including Nairobi



Kenya's Budget and Appropriations Committee vice chairperson, Moses Lessonet.

and Mombasa.

The World Health Organisation has said countries should consider their ability to test and trace before lifting the lockdowns. Last week, the Treasury last week tabled a Sh1.3 billion mini-budget seven days to the end of the current financial year that ends tomorrow. Besides the Sh1.5 billion for the testing kits, the mini-budget includes Sh5.8

billion sent to 47 counties to prepare a 300-bed capacity at each devolved unit in readiness to handle Covid-19 patients and a further Sh3.4 billion for payment of allowances to frontline health workers.

"We rejected the reallocation of Sh3 billion because we had ring-fenced it to specific hospitals. This money was part of the budget of Parliament, which

we were magnanimous to cede to help hospitals respond to the pandemic," John Mbadi, the Leader of Minority in the National Assembly, said. "Then someone wakes up at the Treasury and decides to relocate the money to KMTC and Kemsas for isolation facilities and procurement of reagents and testing kits in total disregard of resolution of this House." He said money for testing kits and reagents should have been factored in the April mini-budget after the outbreak of Covid-19 in March.

Kenya is trailing countries like South Africa on testing with about 165,196 tests that had recorded 6,070 positive cases. South Africa, Africa's biggest economy, has nearly 1.4 million tests and recorded more 104,000 positive cases.

Smaller and poorer nations like Rwanda and Uganda have a better testing rate than Kenya's. Rwanda has carried out the equivalent of 9.38 tests for every 1,000 people as at last week, South Africa had done 24.6, Ghana 9.11 and Uganda 3.36, contrasting with Kenya's 2.82 test per 1,000 people.

According to government officials, a global shortage of testing supplies has affected the country's ability to conduct tests. Kenya's Health ministry

had projected that the country would have about 10,000 cases by the end of May. This modelling used several parameters, one being testing 200,000 to 300,000 people by April 30. Getting hold of kits and the chemical reagents needed to process tests is proving difficult because African countries don't produce their own and need to compete for limited global supplies.

The Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention is setting up a platform for African countries to pool their pandemic-related medical procurement to ease the pain of obtaining testing materials. MPs rejected a petition from the National Assembly committee to support the Treasury's proposals.

Health committee chairperson Sabina Chege said the Ministry of Health had pleaded that Sh2 billion out of the ring-fenced cash be allocated for purchase of reagents and testing kits; Sh700 million to KMTC isolation centres and Sh300 million for purchase of face masks. "I am pleading with the Budget committee that if there is a way to get Sh700 million to KMTC, it will be good because KMTC, which is being used for quarantine, will be left with debt.

## WORLD

## ‘Africa and Asia to face migrant crisis amid pandemic’

NAIROBI

MILLIONS of Asian and African migrants are expected to return home whether through compulsion or voluntarily as their job prospects evaporate due to COVID-19, the International Labour Organization says.

The migrant workers who will be forced to return home after losing their jobs face unemployment and poverty in their home countries, it warned.

In some of the middle-income countries where the migrants will be forced to go back, labor markets that were fragile even before COVID-19 appeared are now further weakened by the strain of high unemployment and serious business disruptions due to the pandemic.

In addition, their families will suffer financially from the loss of the remittances normally sent to them.

These countries will also receive reduced remittances, a vital source of

income for developing economies.

The World Bank has forecast that remittances to low and middle-income countries will fall 19.7 percent to US\$445 billion, representing a loss of a crucial financing lifeline for many vulnerable households.

Due to the coronavirus crisis, remittance flows to sub-Saharan Africa are forecast to fall 23.1 percent to US\$37 billion this year, and a recovery of 4 percent is expected next year, the World Bank said.

The expected decline can be attributed to a combination of factors driven by COVID-19 in key destinations where African migrants reside, including Europe, the United States, the Middle East and China.

These large economies host many sub-Saharan African migrants and are a source of close to a quarter of total remittances sent to the region, the bank said.

The ILO said policies should be put in place to protect stranded migrant



Migrants from Africa, Cuba and Haiti, who are stranded in Honduras after borders were closed due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, shield from the rain during their trek northward in an attempt to reach the US, in Tegucigalpa, Honduras June 3, 2020. (AFP)

workers and to ensure the reintegration of those who return to their home countries.

The organization said helping returning migrants reintegrate will reduce tensions in their home countries, where some communities may fear that returning migrants may bring the virus or take jobs away.

“This is a potential crisis within a crisis,” said Manuela Tomei, director of the organization’s Conditions of Work and Equality Department.

“We know that many millions of migrant workers, who were under lockdown in their countries of work, have lost their jobs and are now expected to return home to countries that are already grappling with weak economies and rising unemployment. Cooperation and planning are key to avert a worse crisis.”

## Limited scope

There are estimated to be 164 million migrant workers worldwide, nearly half of them women, comprising 4.7 percent of the global labor force.

While not all these workers will return home after losing their jobs or for other reasons, informal ILO research in more than 20 countries indicates that many millions are expected to do so.

Most of their home countries have very limited scope to reintegrate such large numbers, and often lack the policies and systems to ensure effective labor migration governance and smooth reintegration plans, including for skills development and recognition.

Despite the unemployment crisis, the ILO said the returning migrant workers bring skills and talent that can help their home economies rebuild better after the pandemic.

However, the key to unlocking the potential is the establishment of rights-based and orderly return and reintegration systems, access to social protection, and proper skills recognition.

This can facilitate better skills and jobs matching, thus increasing productivity for national industries, the organization said.

## Boris Johnson warns ‘fat’ Britons that they must lose weight

LONDON

UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson is ditching his libertarian instincts and considering state interventions to tackle the UK’s high obesity levels.

The coronavirus crisis has persuaded Johnson that ministers have a duty to address excess weight as a major health issue, he told Times Radio yesterday.

The prime minister has previously railed against “nanny state” interventions in the lives of ordinary people, but his – and the nation’s – battle with coronavirus has changed his views. He described how he lost weight while in intensive care with COVID-19 in April, and said he would be considering how to address the nation’s poor record on obesity.

“I have taken a very libertarian stance on obesity,” Johnson said. “But actually when you look at the numbers, when you look at the pressure on the NHS, compare, I’m afraid, this wonderful country of ours to other European countries, we are significantly fatter than most.”

Johnson argued it is not “easy” for politicians to solve obesity but said he would be going through the arguments “carefully” on any government interventions that could follow. He declined to comment directly on whether measures would include taxes on sugar or different treatments.

“We will be happier and fitter and more resistant to diseases like COVID if we can tackle obesity,” he said. “We certainly must have a care for the health of our population.”

The pandemic, which has killed more than 43,000 people in the UK, “has been a disaster, an absolute nightmare for the country,” Johnson said, pledging to learn the lessons from failings in the government’s response.



## UK’s top senior civil servant steps down as PM adviser seeks change

LONDON

BRITAIN’S most senior civil servant stepped down on Sunday after reports of clashes with Prime Minister Boris Johnson’s top political adviser, part of what is expected to be a wider shake up of officials at the heart of power.

Johnson’s senior political adviser, Dominic Cummings, has long been critical of the civil service, saying government is not nimble enough to deliver change. Some newspapers reported he warned aides last week that a “hard rain is going to fall”.

Earlier this year, Johnson forced the resignation of his finance minister, tightening his control over the treasury, and just earlier this month he announced the merger of its diplomatic and aid departments.

Mark Sedwill (pictured), a career diplomat, was appointed cabinet secretary and national security adviser by Johnson’s predecessor Theresa May. In a letter to Johnson released on Sunday, he wrote that, having stayed on for “the acute phase” of the coronavirus crisis, he was now leaving as “the government’s focus is now shifting to domestic and global recovery and renewal”.

He said he would leave government service at the end of September.

Johnson’s office released a letter in which he thanked Sedwill for his “outstanding service”, and asked him to lead a new G7 panel on global economic security as Britain assumes the presidency of the rich nations’ group and hosts its summit next year.

David Frost, Britain’s chief negotiator with the European Union, will replace Sedwill as national security adviser at around the end of August and there will be a competition to appoint a new cabinet secretary and head of the civil service.

Britain’s main opposition Labour Party raised questions over the timing of the move. Helen Hayes, policy chief shadowing the cabinet office, said: “On the day it was revealed millions of jobs across the country could be under threat in the coming months, it is very concerning that Boris Johnson and Dominic Cummings are preoccupied with reshuffling Whitehall.”

Johnson’s team has been criticised over its response to the coronavirus crisis, blamed by opposition parties and some scientists for being too slow to tackle the pandemic.

Britain now has one of the world’s highest death tolls from the disease and both the Bank of England and government budget forecasters have warned of the potential for unemployment to surge as the government phases out temporary support measures for workers hit by lockdown measures.



## Kremlin slams claims over Russia ‘bounties’ to Taliban to kill Americans as elaborate hoax

MOSCOW

KREMLIN spokesman Dmitry Peskov has blasted reports that Russia allegedly offered Afghan militants bounties for killing US military personnel as lies and an elaborate hoax. According to him, the topic was not discussed between the two leaders.

“These claims are nothing but lies,” the Kremlin spokesman said, commenting on the publication of The New York Times.

“Once again, we can only ex-

press regret that once largest, reputable and high-quality world media outlets have been increasingly more often publishing elaborate hoaxes in the last few years, which definitely does not bode well with keeping up with their reputation and prestige,” Peskov (pictured) stressed.

“If intelligence services continue to be accountable before the president in the US, then I suggest you focus on the relevant statement of President Trump who already evaluated these publica-



tions,” he added. When asked if Putin and Trump had had a phone call to discuss these allegations, Peskov said, “No.”

On Friday, The New York Times claimed that an unidentified unit of the Russian military intelligence encouraged Taliban militants to attack military personnel of the international coalition in Afghanistan.

The newspaper alleged that these conclusions of American intelligence services were presented for Trump’s judgment a

few months ago, while the White House National Security Council discussed the topic in late March.

In turn, Trump revealed that he had not been briefed about any such attacks in Afghanistan.

On Sunday, he took to Twitter to announce that the US intelligence did not find this information credible, slamming The New York Times report as “possibly another fabricated Russia Hoax, maybe by the Fake News” meant to tarnish the Republicans’ reputation.

Agencies

## Chinese premier stresses stabilising foreign trade, investment

BEIJING

CHINESE Premier Li Keqiang on Sunday urged continuous efforts to expand opening-up and stabilize the overall performance of foreign trade and investment.

Li, also a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, said that stabilizing the overall performance of foreign trade and investment is of great importance to stabilizing economy and employment, at a symposium of government officials and enterprise executives.

Li said the country’s foreign trade environment will remain grave and complex as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to spread worldwide and plunges the global economy into recession, while the Chinese economy is deeply integrated into the world economy.

The premier stressed efforts to ensure stability on the six fronts and security in the six areas, while promoting higher-level opening-up.

The six fronts refer to employ-

ment, the financial sector, foreign trade, foreign investment, domestic investment, and expectations. The six areas refer to job security, basic living needs, operations of market entities, food and energy security, stable industrial and supply chains, and the normal functioning of primary-level governments.

Li stressed the need to roll out new measures to keep foreign trade and investment stable, especially increasing support to secure small-, medium- and micro-sized firms and labor-intensive companies, while helping major foreign trade enterprises solve problems to better keep employment stable.

At the symposium, Li called for improving the implementation of export-tax rebates, guiding financial institutions to strengthen funding support to ease the liquidity difficulties of foreign trade enterprises, tapping the potential of customs clearance facilitation reform and optimizing services for enterprises.

The premier called for efforts to strengthen communication and coordination with relevant countries, unblock international



Chinese Premier Li Keqiang, also a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, presides over a symposium on stabilizing foreign trade and investment in Beijing, on Sunday. Vice Premier Han Zheng, a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, also attended the meeting. (Xinhua)

freight transport channels, and open up more “fast tracks” to provide convenience for business personnel.

Li encouraged foreign trade companies to speed up transformation and upgrading and improve the quality and added-value of export products, while acceler-

ating the development of cross-border e-commerce, online trading and other new models.

International cooperation in multiple areas and levels should be strengthened and the opening-up of the service sector, especially the high-end service industry, should be further expanded to

establish a market-oriented, law-based and internationalized business environment, he said.

The premier also called for optimized preferential policies to attract more foreign investors, as well as more solid efforts to keep industrial and supply chains stable.

Xinhua

BOTH China and the Arab states believe that true friendship stands out in times of adversity, which testifies to their shared future in the joint fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Having gone through this joint fight against the coronavirus, the China-Arab strategic partnership now enjoys an even stronger foundation, closer people-to-people friendship and brighter prospects for cooperation,” Chinese President Xi Jinping said on June 22 in a congratulatory letter to the China-Arab States Political Parties Dialogue Extraordinary Meeting.

## China, Arab states join hands to combat COVID-19

The message from Xi, who is also General Secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee, fully demonstrated the firm resolve and sincere wish of China and Arab states to pool their efforts together to fight the pandemic, enhance exchanges and cooperation, and promote the building of a community with a shared future for China and Arab states.

The CPC is committed to enhancing mutual trust, strengthening communication, and

working closely with political parties from different countries to forge, on the basis of a new form of international relations, a new type of party-to-party relations featuring seeking common grounds while transcending differences, mutual respect and mutual learning.

The CPC also remains committed to formulating international party-to-party exchanges and cooperation networks in various forms and at multiple levels, so as to create a mighty force that

enables the world to build a community with a shared future for mankind.

Recently, the extraordinary meeting with the theme of jointly building a community with a shared future for China and Arab states in the new era resonated with myriad countries.

It is of vital importance for Arab states to take joint actions to cope with risks and challenges and prevail over the difficulties, said Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, also Fatah Chairman,

adding that their joint actions will play an important role in enhancing political mutual trust and deepening the Arab states-China strategic partnership.

The extraordinary meeting demonstrated that China and Arab states enjoy a solid foundation for building political consensus, strengthening solidarity and cooperation, and jointly building a community with a shared future.

In the face of the unexpected COVID-19 outbreak, China and

Arab states have rendered each other help and fought shoulder to shoulder, opening up a new chapter in building a community with a shared future for China and Arab states.

At the most critical moment in China’s fight against the epidemic, heads of Arab states and leaders of regional organizations such as the League of Arab States (LAS) and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) expressed sympathy and support for China. On its part, China has always cherished the

support and assistance offered by Arab states and people as well as their friendship.

Likewise, when Arab states are struck by the virus, the Chinese people feel for their pain. China has provided a large number of medical supplies to Arab states, and held video conferences over COVID-19 control with health experts from 17 Arab states, the LAS and the GCC. China has also sent medical experts to eight Arab states to meet their immediate needs, and shared its proven protocols of diagnosis, treatment and control without any reservation. **People’s Daily**



## UN highlights urgent need to tackle impact of likely electric car battery production boom

### UNITED NATIONS

THE United Nations has highlighted the urgent need to tackle the impact of the anticipated boom of electric car battery production.

Demand for raw materials used in the production of electric car batteries is set to soar, prompting the UN trade body, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), to call for the social and environmental impacts of the extraction of raw materials, which include human rights abuses, to be urgently addressed, UN News reported Sunday.

Electric cars are rapidly becoming more popular among consumers, and UNCTAD predicts that some 23 million will be sold over the coming decade: the market for rechargeable car batteries, currently estimated at 7 billion U.S. dollars, is forecast to rise to 58 billion U.S. dollars by 2024, it said.

The shift to electric mobility is in line with ongoing efforts to reduce the world's dependence on fossil fuels, and reduce harmful greenhouse gas emissions responsible for climate change, but a new report from UNCTAD, warns that the raw materials used in electric car batteries, are highly concentrated in a small number of countries, which raises a number of concerns.

For example, two-thirds of all cobalt production happens in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). According to the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), about 20 percent of cobalt supplied from the DRC comes from artisanal mines, where human rights abuses have been reported, and up to 40,000 children work in extremely dangerous conditions in the mines for meagre income.

And in Chile, lithium mining uses nearly 65 percent of the water in the country's Salar de Atacama region, one of the driest desert areas in the world, to



pump out brines from drilled wells. This has forced local quinoa farmers and llama herders to migrate and abandon

ancestral settlements. It has also contributed to environment degradation, landscape damage

and soil contamination, groundwater depletion and pollution.

Noting that "the rise in demand for the strategic raw materials used to manufacture electric car batteries will open more trade opportunities for the countries that supply these materials," UNCTAD's director of international trade, Pamela Coke-Hamilton, was cited as emphasizing the importance, for these countries, to "develop their capacity to move up the value chain."

"In the DRC, this would mean building processing plants and refineries that would add value and, potentially, jobs within the country."

The report recommended that countries such as DRC provide "conducive environment to attract investment to establish new mines or expand existing ones." UNCTAD also recommended that the industry find ways to reduce its dependence on critical raw materials.

Xinhua

## UN urges Somali leaders to chart way forward on 2021 polls

### MOGADISHU

THE United Nations office in Somalia has called on the country's leaders to reach consensus on a way forward on holding a universal vote as early as March 2021.

In a statement issued in Mogadishu on Sunday, the UN lauded the National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC) chairperson Halima Yarey for presenting electoral options to realize direct voting for Somalis.

"Now that NIEC chairperson has presented electoral options, the UN in Somalia urges broad consultation among Somali political leaders to reach consensus on a way forward," said the UN.

It said the planned three-day meeting of the national government and the Federal Member States which is slated for early July is a good next step for the leaders to agree on the electoral process.

The UN statement comes after the poll body said on Saturday it will not be possible to hold elections this year due to technical and logistical issues including the security situation in the country.

Halima Yarey, chairperson of NIEC said the poll body requires 13 more months to prepare a credible poll where Somalis will have an opportunity to take part in 'one person, one vote' election for the first time since 1969.

"The commission needs to register citizens, register political parties and the candidates," Yarey told parliament in Mogadishu.

She said the earliest Somalia can go to the polls is March 2021 if Parliament approves the manual voter registration option which she said could take only nine months as opposed to biometric registration which is costly in terms of acquisition and training of staff.

Somalia is preparing for universal suffrage elections, which will be the first of its kind after more than two decades since the outbreak of the civil war that followed the collapse of the government in 1992.

However, the country's opposition alliance (FNP) on Sunday said the electoral commission has lost public and political stakeholders' trust and called for the entire commission to resign.

Xinhua

## Complete epidemic control measures reassure us: Indonesian employee working for Jakarta-Bandung high-speed railway

### By Asih Lestari

I took my first high-speed rail trip in China in 2015. Both the clean and comfort carriages and the convenient services impressed me very much.

Since then, I've been hoping that Indonesia can build its own high-speed rails and that I can personally take part in the construction. Therefore, when learning the open recruitment of the Jakarta-Bandung high-speed railway undertaken by the Power Construction Corporation of China (POWERCHINA), I signed up at the first opportunity and fortunately became an employee of the company in Feb. 2017. At present, I translate and manage Indonesian employees at the first work area of the first division of the Jakarta-Bandung high-speed railway project. Besides, I also join external coordination affairs.

The Jakarta-Bandung high-speed railway is a signature China-Indonesia joint project under the Belt & Road Initiative. Upon completion, it will reduce the travel time between the two places from 3 hours to 40 minutes.

My work area is responsible for constructing the No.1 tunnel

of the Jakarta-Bandung high-speed railway. Located in suburban Jakarta, the tunnel goes underneath residential areas, light rail overpass and express ways. It is one of the 26 most important and difficult sections along the high-speed railway for its complicated geological conditions and high safety risks.

The No.1 tunnel is also the only tunnel holed through with shield-driven method along the Jakarta-Bandung high-speed railway. A huge Tunnel Boring Machine (TBM) was employed to construct the tunnel, the largest of its kind ever being operated in Southeast Asia.

Indonesian government officials, as well as personnel from engineering and academic institutions flocked to the construction site for observation, learning experiences for Indonesia's independent engineering projects in the future.

I didn't know much about the shield-driven method at the beginning, so I consulted different materials in my spare time. Every time I encountered a problem, my Chinese colleagues were always there explaining to me patiently. This has not only expanded my knowledge base, but also improved my capability



An employee conducts safety inspection for electric carriers at the No. 1 tunnel of the Jakarta-Bandung high-speed railway, Feb. 10. (File photo)

site must be disinfected three times a day, and all employees are requested to wear masks in public space. Site employees take body temperatures twice a day, and enter the construction

area only after disinfection and wearing masks. Safety distance is also kept at the site. Besides, an international SOS medical center has been established at the site to cope with emergen-

cies. The complete epidemic control measures reassure us, and make us concentrating on the work.

Under the joint efforts of both Chinese and Indonesian constructors, everything is going well with the No.1 tunnel. Over 51 percent of the total workload has been completed so far.

The project department also actively fulfills its social responsibility, donating masks, disinfectants and milk to local hospitals. The packages of the donation were painted "Friendship and Mutual Assistance" in both English and Chinese, which carried the wish of the Chinese company to jointly fight the pandemic with the Indonesian people.

The Jakarta-Bandung high-speed railway has created abundant jobs for young Indonesian students and engineers, cultivated a batch of local constructors, and driven economic and social development along its route.

I looking forward to taking the high-speed train after the project is completed and feeling the joy to be brought by my contribution. I also hope that high-speed railway can extend to my hometown Sumatra in the near future.

People's Daily

## Burundi's new cabinet includes two under Western sanctions over rights abuses

### NAIROBI

NEW Burundi President Evariste Ndayishimiye unveiled a 15-member cabinet including two ministers who are under U.S. or European sanctions over their alleged role in violently crushing street protests.

Ndayishimiye, 52, a retired army general, won last month's presidential election as the ruling party's candidate, defeating six opposition contenders. He had been due to take office in August, but the death of predecessor Pierre Nkurunziza earlier this month brought the succession forward.

The new cabinet unveiled late on Sunday includes prime minister Alain Guillaume Bunyoni, who has been under U.S. sanctions since 2015 over his alleged role in violations of human rights and repression of dissent during violence sparked by Nkurunziza's decision to seek a third term in office.

Critics accused Nkurunziza of violating a constitutional limit of



two five-year terms per president. He denied wrongdoing.

also on the U.S. sanctions list, was appointed as interior minister. Neither the government, nor

Bunyoni and Ndirakobuca, were immediately available for comment.

Bunyoni, an influential figure in the ruling CNDD-FDD party, was one of the key allies of Nkurunziza, serving as security minister during the violent crackdown on unrest in 2015.

The United Nations has said in recent years that under Nkurunziza's rule, members of the state security forces and the ruling party's youth wing routinely gang-raped, tortured and killed political opponents.

The East African nation of 11 million people is one of the world's poorest countries. It became an international pariah after Nkurunziza stamped out protests triggered by his decision to run for a third term in 2015.

Donors cut off funding while Nkurunziza shut down the U.N. human rights office and withdrew Burundi's membership in the International Criminal Court.

Agencies

## No reason to expect Kim Jong-un to become North Korean leader, says Russian envoy

### MOSCOW

THERE is no reason to believe that North Korean leader Kim Jong-un's sister Kim Yo-jong is being trained to take the helm of the country, Russian Ambassador to Pyongyang Alexander Matsegora said in an open interview with TASS First Deputy Director General Mikhail Gusman yesterday.

"There is absolutely no reason to say that she is being trained for such a situation," the envoy pointed out.

"She is a rather young person though she has serious political and foreign policy experience. She can be viewed as a well-established high-ranking statesperson."

This where I would put a full stop," Matsegora added.

He emphasized that according to available information, Kim Yo-jong (pictured) serves as first deputy chief of the de-



partment for organization and instruction of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea, which is a key element of the party machine.

"It's possible that the leader of the party and the country is the actual head of the department," Matsegora noted, adding that it used to be that way in the past.

"If so, then the department's first deputy chief holds a rather high position," he said.

At the same time, in his words, it's been a long time since anyone was considered to be number two in North Korea's hierarchy.

"No one dares to call themselves number two in the country," Matsegora noted. "I think that if you asked comrade Kim Yo-jong whether she was number two, she would answer with a strong 'no,'" the Russian ambassador said.

Agencies

## China's intangible cultural heritage goes online, gains new vitality

MORE and more inheritors of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) in China are taking it to online platforms to integrate ICH into modern life, in an attempt to attract more public attention on and consumption of ICH-related products, win people's respect for their wisdom and craftsmanship, and showcase the charm of cultural heritage.

Qiao Xue, a young inheritor of handmade leather art, an item of the ICH list of Yinchuan city in northwest China's Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, opened an account on short video platform Douyin, also known as Tik Tok

last July to show her expertise in leather carving. In less than a year, Qiao has hosted nearly 60 livestreaming shows on the platform, selling handmade leather products totaling two million yuan (around \$282,789), with the highest turnover created in a single livestreaming show hitting 450,000 yuan.

A project aiming at better promoting and inheriting ICH was launched on Douyin in April 2019.

According to the platform, more than 40 ICH inheritors participating in the project had gained over a million followers

in the past year. So far, clips uploaded on Douyin have featured 96 percent of China's national intangible cultural heritage projects, or 1,318 items.

The number of videos related to intangible cultural heritage programs posted on the platform has hit 48 million, with more than 200 billion views and nearly 6.5 billion likes.

On June 13, China's Cultural and Natural Heritage Day, the country's Ministry of Culture and Tourism (MCT) launched a series of online promotional events for ICH, broadening the

way of ICH protection, inheritance and development.

Diversity was a major highlight of the promotional events. Over a thousand ICH documentaries and feature films were played online, and online discussions about ICH were joined by both internet influencers and young icons. Besides, livestreaming platforms invited users to share their stories about ICH, and e-commerce platforms jointly held an online shopping festival to promote the sales of ICH products.

Many Chinese internet platforms, such as Tencent Video,

Iqiyi, Douyin, Kuaishou and Sina Weibo, have recently launched characteristic ICH sections to showcase relevant videos and images. Tencent Video, for example, focusing on Chinese cuisine, launched food documentaries such as Breakfast in China and Flavorful Origins to display the charm of traditional Chinese food as ICH items.

Its rival Iqiyi created documentary series on ICH items that are frequently seen in movies and TV dramas, including embroidery, velvet flower, Kunqu opera and Peking Opera.

Douyin used a combination of

short videos and livestreaming to showcase ICH items such as traditional Chinese oral stunts and Guqin, a seven-stringed plucked musical instrument in some ways similar to the zither, in an attempt to encourage its users to participate in online discussions and share their own stories about ICH.

The young generation represents the future of ICH. The promotional events, staged online in youth-friendly formats and inviting innovative, pioneering and fashion-sensitive youth representatives, has found a more trendy approach to pro-

mote ICH. Sina Weibo invited celebrities, online influencers in culture and art, and ICH institutes across the country to join hotspot topics, calling on the young people to pay more attention to ICH protection by sharing stories about ICH, introducing splendid ICH items, and improving public ICH literacy.

Kuaishou, a popular Chinese short video and livestreaming platform, launched ICH-related hashtags to encourage more young craftsmen to display the making of ICH handicrafts in a more youth-friendly way.

People's Daily



Waluguru Original Music Band's soloist, Kinde Makengele, in action during his band's recent show which took place in Morogoro last weekend. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT SABATO KASIKA

## BET Awards highlight Black voices as artists turn political

NEW YORK

THE BET Awards served as an extension of the voices of Black people protesting in the streets about the inequalities Black people face daily, as artists used their performances to highlight the Black Lives Matter movement, civil rights and the lives of those lost because of police officers, including George Floyd.

DaBaby, with his face pressed against the ground as an officer's knee crippled his neck – replicating the last moments of Floyd's life – rapped a verse from the Black Lives Matter remix of his hit song "Rockstar." His performance also featured images from protests, a reflection of the current world in the wake of Floyd's death and the death of others, including Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery.

Sunday's show, a virtual event because of the coronavirus pandemic, featured a number of highly produced, well-crafted and pre-taped performances. The BET Awards kicked off with Black artists rapping and singing anthems about the Black experience and fighting for equal rights.

The 12-year-old sensation Keedron Bryant, who turned heads on social media with his passionate performance about being a young Black man in today's world, started the show with an a cappella performance of his poignant song "I Just Wanna Live," which earned him a record deal. That was followed by an all-star performance of Public Enemy's 1989 anthem "Fight the Power," featuring Nas, Black Thought, Rapsody and YG adding new lyrics to the song, even namedropping Taylor and others.

Michelle Obama highlighted Beyoncé's commitment to the Black community before presenting her with the humanitarian award, saying: "You can see it in everything she does, from her music that gives voice to Black joy and Black pain, to her activism that demands justice for Black lives."

Beyoncé used her speech to encourage viewers to vote "like our life depends on it" in the upcoming election.

"I want to dedicate this award to all of my brothers out there, all of my sisters out there inspiring me, marching and fighting for change. Your voices are being heard and you're proving to our ancestors that their struggles were not in vain. Now we have one more thing we need to do to walk in our true power, and that is to vote," she said. "There are people banking on us staying at home during local elections and primaries happening in states across the country. We have to vote like our life depends on it, because it does."

Sunday's show celebrated BET's 20th awards show and BET's 40th year as a network. The three-hour event, which aired on CBS for the first time, was hosted by comedian, actress and TV personality Amanda Seales, who starred in several skits, including one about women who identify as "Karen," a common stereotype and term for

racist and privileged white women.

Other artists were political during their performances, including Roddy Ricch, who wore a Black Lives Matter shirt while he rapped, Alicia Keys, Anderson Paak and Jay Rock, as well as brothers SiR and D Smoke, who performed with their mother Jackie Gouché.

Lil Wayne paid tribute to NBA icon Kobe Bryant, who died in January, with a performance of his 2009 song "Kobe Bryant," weaving in new lyrics. Wayne Brady, in a glittery suit, rolled around on top of a piano as he sang a medley of Little Richard hits.

Nipsey Hussle, who was named best male hip-hop artist and earned the humanitarian award at last year's BET Awards, won video of the year for "Higher," a clip he filmed with DJ Khaled and John Legend shortly before he died.

"This is for Nipsey Hussle and hip-hop," Khaled said in a taped video. "Nipsey Hussle, thank you for working with me on this 'Higher' record. I appreciate you. Nipsey's family, we love you."

The BET Awards, one of the first awards shows to air virtually, featured performances that were sharp with artsy stage production, giving extra life to the songs being performed. It was a welcome break from the "living room" and homebound performances hundreds of artists have shared on social media since the pandemic hit in March.

Chloe x Halle, who have successfully performed for various TV shows and events during the pandemic while promoting their new album, gave an epic performance of their songs "Do It" and "Forgive Me." R&B star Summer Walker, who played guitar and sang, was also impressive during her performance, which featured Usher.

Megan Thee Stallion went to the desert with background dancers as she twerked and rapped her No. 1 hit "Savage." She won best female hip-hop artist, beating out Cardi B and Nicki Minaj.

"Oh my God, I probably recorded this video like 10 times. It feels so crazy doing this from my house," she said. "I used to watch the BET Awards all the time thinking, 'One day that's going to be me going up there accepting my award' – and now it is."

Though the BET Awards are technically about handing out trophies, the awards were an afterthought. During the live telecast, Ricch won album of the year for his debut "Please Excuse Me for Being Antisocial"; Lizzo was named best female R&B/pop artist; and Burna Boy won best international act. Overall, Chris Brown, Beyoncé and Ricch were the night's big winners, taking home two honors each. Beyoncé won the BET HER award for "Brown Skin Girl," shared with daughter Blue Ivy Carter as well as Wizkid and Saint JHN. The song also won Beyoncé and Blue Ivy a Soul Train Music Award last year.

## With Yanga hard pressed for VPL runners up slot, GSM Group has work cut out for the medium term

BY CORRESPONDENT MICHAEL ENEZA

YOUNG Africans SC (Yanga) have a new outlook with telecommunications firm, GSM Group, on the club's rescue either as sponsors or business partners in the model of their next street rivals Simba SC. The jury is still out if the company format that the Msimbazi Street club side has labored to adopt is working properly and that it can survive changes of mood – or of fortune – in one direction or another. That is why there isn't too much for Jangwani Street side's leaders to learn from the still untested format in place at Msimbazi Street club, and can at best expect to shore up club fortunes.

The need for a workable formula in that direction has never been as manifestly clear as at present, with the club battling to ensure a second slot finishing which it is far from assured in the face of a well organized Azam FC. What is however at issue isn't whether it eclipses the city outskirts big guns or not but the fact that they didn't look like actual rivals to Simba in this Premier League season, despite a lot of chest thumping during the 'coronavirus break.' The travails of the team on the pitch was however camouflaged by upbeat spirits in relation to signing players.

As a matter of fact this is another sphere of competition between the city giants and partially with other Premier League sides, as registration builds up or cramps morale not just in the team but among the fans. Confidence is diminished when a club side loses a key player and it is evident they have no replacement, or sufficient depth in player availability in the squad in such a manner that the absence of a star player being poached isn't necessarily going to take the team's edge away. It's what happened when Heritier Makambo



Yanga players feature in a training session at the Tanganyika Law Society (TLS) venue in Dar es Salaam on Sunday to shape up for the Azam Sports Federation Cup's last eight game against Kagera Sugar, set for today in the city. PHOTO: COURTESY OF YANGA

left Yanga, 'when all is said and done.'

One problem with the matter is that it is circular, and isn't amenable to technical discussion per se as everything hinges on money. The club is short of money – but finally all clubs are short of money but at different levels and about contrasting options they wish to finance, etc and expect that the new sponsor-cum-investor will make a difference in the club. The reasoning is that the club has a new opportunity for success as the company will have the sort of cash it needs to make a difference, such that the club side has a clear chance of actually challenging for the title.

This is what it failed to do in the season that is now being rounded off after the title was declared with six matches to spare, which may not perhaps be a record but is an excellent achievement for the Msimbazi Street side. The problem with substantiating the new hopes is that there is a cyclic reasoning maze which can lead to mixed results, but definitely with a significant infusion of cash tangible

results are to be expected under any circumstances. The issue is whether the issue was cash in the first place, and then, if cash is available, how should it be used to maximum effect.

There will be disputes in that direction between cash mongers and connoisseurs of tactics, and one can safely expect that 'cash mongers' shall win the day. They have an idée fixe in how the problem of team performance is resolved – registering good players, whereas experience at least with more visible Premier League tournaments shows that the proper location of club progress is coaching and using players, such that even registration is geared to solving technical problems. It is hard to say that there is a proper grasp of problems of technique, not just purchasing players.

How these issues are solved depends on the mood in the club, and probably the new sponsor-cum-investor, what sort of ideas of club development or more appropriately team formation and technical stability or improvement he will have in

mind. Taking up important foreign premier leagues, at times the vision of a sponsor-investor counts for a great deal, as it becomes the yardstick to measure success and failure. Only the proper investor can take a medium term and longer term view, and thus tolerate relatively poor results at the start or major season following his takeover, so long as by some criteria he can see that the team is actually progressing, upward.

Rectifying Yanga to be not just serious contenders but arch-rivals to Simba is something that needs to be factored out and sorted out accordingly, first what sort of leadership there is and how tuned it is to the needs of football improvement. Chances are that 'slash and burn' techniques are popular with the fans as they think only of winning the next match rather than basic statistics which ought to govern team rebuilding like ability to possess, to tackle or to score. From the club leadership one comes to the technical bench, its composition and habits, and then to the fans.

## Stara Fashion Week set for next month

BY GUARDIAN REPORTER



A model showcases a creation by a domestic designer in a recent Stara Fashion Week, which took place in Dar es Salaam.

MORE than 30 designers have registered to showcase at the runway shows, dubbed 'Stara Fashion Week', to be held in Dar es Salaam from July 24-25.

Apart from the runway shows, the event will involve designer stalls, with products available for purchase, workshops and conferences.

The conferences' participants will have an opportunity to meet influencers, renowned figures from the modest fashion world while investors will have the chance to connect with new markets.

The event is also seen as monumental in bringing the people of modest fashion together in order to allow the market to grow through collaboration and influencers.

Various brands are set to be put on the runway in this year's fashion shows.

They are MIMAS Designers, Cute Naffy, Zezo Designs, Fiah Collection, Paz Designs, and Stara And Beauty.

Other brands are AB Designs, Irada Styles, Africa Sana, Mozen Designs, Kulwa Mkwandule, Asia Idarious, and Mustafa Hasannali.

Many more brands are, moreover, eagerly awaited to launch their collections.

One of the next month shows' most highlights is Marashi Zanzibar aspect, slated to garnish the event with their cocktail signature, Oud.

Stara Fashion Week is sponsored by Kanza Point, Asas, Coca Cola, Arms Day Care, Marashi Zanzibar, Arabian Hair Oil, Jast Express, Sugar Barry and others.

Fashion lovers have been

asked to take a look at this spotlight event for conservative wear.

The works of 30 designers will be showcased under the spotlights at the National Museum venue located at Posta, opposite Institute of Finance Management, in the city.

The event gears towards creating mainstream fashion out of modest wear.

The show also intends to celebrate the 'Made in Tanzania' products by encouraging Stara Fashion firm to produce quality clothes for both men and women.

With most women seeking to follow the rules but also be chic in doing so, modest fashion has become quite the growing market within the fashion industry.

Modest fashion serves as a natural bridge for models, fashion designers and textile industry.

Even though modest fashion is still a budding industry, the global economy states that spending on clothing is expected to grow.

During the event, models wear everything from earthy tunics to floral dresses and shimmering gowns, all kept demure with shape-concealing cuts. Every look is also accompanied by decorative turbans and headscarves, as well as chignons for the unveiled.

The two-day show, which intends to become Tanzania's leading modest fashion event, will not only promote modest fashion but also shape new trends.

Stara Fashion Week is also seeking to bring together trend-setters and models from the modest fashion and famous icons for modest brands.



# SPORT

Stara Fashion Week  
set for next month

COMPREHENSIVE REPORT, PAGE 18

**TONIGHT @ 9:00**

**EATV TUESDAY**

11:00 DADAZ LIVE  
12:00 MUYA  
12:30 Msozi Kifaani (r)  
13:00 Wanawake Live (r)  
13:30 Kati Za Wana  
14:00 DK 10 za Maangamizi (r)  
14:30 Bball Kings Highlights (r)  
15:00 Funguka  
15:30 SPORTS (r)  
16:30 #HASHTAG  
17:00 SSELECT  
17:55 Kurasa  
18:00 eNewz  
18:30 Music/Soap  
19:00 EATV SAA 1  
19:45 MJADALA  
20:00 DADAZ (r)

**NIRVANA**  
Nirvana explores the hottest trends in fashion, beauty, art and lifestyle as well as interviews with notable people from the entertainment, art and fashion industries.

**eastafrica RADIO**

06:00 Supa Breakfast  
10:00 MAMAMIA  
12:00 Kipenga Xtra  
13:00 Planet Bongo  
16:00 EA Drive  
20:00 Kipenga  
21:00 The Cruise

**88.1FM DAR ES SALAAM**

## Yanga eye redemption in Federation Cup



Yanga players congratulate their team mate, Deus Kaseke, who netted a goal for the squad in a Vodacom Premier League match against Ndanda FC, which took place in Dar es Salaam on Saturday. PHOTO: COURTESY OF YANGA

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

HAVING suffered the indignity of seeing their rivals, Simba SC, crowned Premier League champions for the third time in a row, Young Africans SC (Yanga) have little time to lick their wounds.

They will be looking to progress to the semi-finals of the Azam Sports Federation Cup when they host Kagera Sugar at the National Stadium in Dar es

Salaam today.

Yanga's chance of redemption will be paramount as the Azam Sports Federation Cup represents their only hope of winning a trophy this season.

They are aiming at winning this competition in order to represent Tanzania in the CAF

Confederation Cup next season.

As things stand, soccer fans should expect a fierce contest as Kagera Sugar, under head coach Mecky Mexime, are not pushovers whenever they face big boys.

Either squad is determined to progress to the semi-finals, and

due to their apparent safety at the top of the league table, the squads will not have a problem in going after the Federation Cup trophy.

Moreover, both Yanga and Kagera Sugar coaches have an emotional reason to go after the domestic cup as well.

Yanga are seeking to make up for an unfulfilling league campaign and prove that they are still a team to be feared.

And for Mexime he intends to announce that their league triumph in the game against Yanga was not a fluke.

Yanga have a deeper and more talented roster than Kagera Sugar on paper.

Matches, though, are not played on paper as Luc Eymael charges found out in the 3-0 drubbing early this year at the same venue.

Kagera Sugar will be looking at their attacking duo of Yusuph Mhili and Kelvin Sabato to inflict damage on Yanga once again.

Mhili already has 16 goals and four assists in all competitions so far this season, and, for Yanga, it feels like if they can keep the duo quiet, that may be most of the battle won.

In Lindi, a relegation-threatened Alliance FC will be looking to pull off an upset against hosts Namungo FC who are tough to beat at home.

The last time these two locked horns, spoils were shared with a 1-1 scoreline.

Azam Sports Federation Cup Quarterfinal fixtures and venues;

**Tuesday, June 30, 2020**

Yanga Vs Kagera Sugar (National Stadium)

Namungo FC Vs Alliance FC (Majaliwa Stadium)

## Wisdom Musica band set for Asia tour in August

By Correspondent Marc

Nkwame, Arusha

IT is not easy for Tanzania to send music troupes abroad, but when the feat is achieved, it gets even harder for such a band to come from Arusha, a region not very well known when it comes to producing entertainment in the country.

However with the recent launch of Wisdom Musica, a newly outfitted music troupe, the country may soon send a band for a tour in Asia, according to the group's General Manager, Cletus Wilbert.

Speaking during the band's launch at Orlando Garden at Sakina-Azimio area in Arusha, Wilbert revealed that they will soon embark on a countrywide tour.

He stated that later on, the band plans to fly to Asia for an extended tour by the end of August 2020.

"We have sent proposals to various countries abroad, but so far it is those in the Asian continent that have responded positively, that is why we plan to start there," the General Manager said.

He stated that other areas and dates for the intended tour will be announced later as time goes by.

Arusha Regional Commissioner, Idd Kimanta, attended the band's launch last weekend and promised to support

all forms of sports, culture and musical entertainment in his precinct.

"Bands and other entertainment groups must learn to cooperate and, where possible, involve musicians from other parts of the country in order to create challenges for local groups to

initiate new sounds and styles," Kimanta said.

Indeed, even during the Wisdom Musica band's launching event, a number of supporting acts from Arusha and Dar es Salaam were invited to boost the show.

They include prominent musician, Nyoshi El Saadat and

his Bogoss Musica band, Bushoke's Band, Mwinjuma Muumin, Les Mwenje Jazz and Rikenest Band.

One of the artistes in attendance, Nyoshi, said many dance music bands collapse because musicians do not seem to be settled and can easily be lured to leave groups.

He called for unity and

cooperation among the music bands' members.

Wisdom Musica, which was initiated in Monduli District, is yet to release its own songs. But the new band may, as disclosed by its officials, enter the studio soon for the project.

## Kagera Sugar striker ready for move to other club

By Correspondent Adam Fungamwango

KAGERA Sugar forward, Yusuph Mhili, has stated he is welcoming offers from various clubs in the country, which need his services, but he has given his current outfit priority.

Mhili, a former Yanga striker, had signed a one-year contract with Kagera Sugar after featuring for Ndanda FC on loan from Yanga.

The promising forward stated he is set to see out his contract with Kagera Sugar, noting he will join any other outfit which will present him with a good offer.

"I'm welcoming any outfit for discussions, I'm ready to play for any side, even Yanga, I should at least seal agreement with the squad," he noted.

"I will, nevertheless, give my current club, Kagera Sugar, priority, given I'm still the club's player."

The forward is in great form this season given he has scored 13 goals to hold the second spot in the Vodacom Premier League goal scorers' list.

Simba's forward, Meddie Kagera, is the leading goal scorer, having drilled in 19 goals.

"Setting targets and working hard is the most important thing, that is why my form has not experienced a drop after the domestic top flight's restart, I always make the most of scoring opportunities," Mhili stated.

He disclosed he is seeking to net 20 goals this season, therefore, he has seven goals left in his target.

In a Vodacom Premier League clash pitting Kagera Sugar against KMC FC, played in Kagera on Sunday, Mhili netted Kagera Sugar's goal in the match that ended with the teams settling for 1-1 draw.

The speedy striker as well scored for his club in a league encounter with Azam FC, which had Kagera Sugar posting 1-0 victory.



Yusuph Mhili



Waluguru Original Music Band's vocalists, Deogratius David 'Killer Boy' (R) and Amina Remmy showcase their prowess at the group's recent show, which took place in Morogoro last weekend. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT SABATO KASIKA

## Flexibles by David Chikoko

